What's Race Got to Do With It?
Narratives of Asian Americans in Asian/White Interracial Relationships

A Dissertation

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Christine Shirley Wu

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Abstract

Despite high rates of Asian Americans in interracial romantic partnerships with Whites and the sociohistorical context of interracial relationships and race in the United States, there is limited empirical work regarding Asian Americans' experiences of navigating race and racial differences in Asian/White romantic relationships. Drawing from the master narrative framework, this mixed-methods study aimed to describe Asian Americans' experiences in Asian/White interracial relationships, identify master and alternative narratives of addressing racial differences within participants' responses, and examine how narratives relate to psychological adjustment and relationship quality. Participants (N = 189) were self-identified Asian American young adults in committed relationships with White romantic partners. Using thematic analysis, I found that participants received three forms of cultural socialization about Asian/White relationships: Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride, White Supremacy and Racism, and Racial De-Emphasis. Cultural socialization also informed four racial tropes about Asian/White relationships: Fetishization of Multiracial Children, Ethnic-Racial Betrayal, Asian Female/White Male Couples, and Asian Male/White Female Couples. Using thematic analysis, I also identified societal narratives of Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness that were internalized in participants' discussions of race and racial differences in their relationships. Quantitative coding of narrative internalization found that Multiculturalism had the highest mean rating, followed by Color-Blindness and then Racial Awareness. Multiple linear regressions were conducted to determine the main effects of narrative internalization on relationship quality, psychological distress, social belonging, and ethnic-racial identity affect. None of the main effects were significant

except for the Multiculturalism narrative on ethnic-racial identity affect (*B* = .10, *SE* = .05, *p* = .04); however, this effect was no longer significant when analyses were repeated with a subsample (*n* = 186) that excluded inattentive responders (*n* = 3). Overall, results demonstrate that participants receive multiple, conflicting messages about race and interraciality that complicate how they perceive and discuss race and racial differences in their relationships.

Keywords: Asian American, Asian/White, interracial, romantic relationships, master narrative

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What's Race Got to Do With It? Narratives of Asian Americans in Asian/White Interracial Relationships

Rates of interracial marriage in the United States have increased steadily over the past 50 years since the 1967 *Loving v. Virginia* ruling, when the Supreme Court struck down state bans on interracial marriage (*Loving v. Virginia*, 1967). Asian Americans have the highest rate of interracial marriage compared to major racial groups in the United States (Livingston & Brown, 2017) and are most commonly intermarried with Whites (Qian et al., 2001; Qian & Lichter, 2007). Given the history of White supremacy and racism in the United States, the increase in interracial relationships is viewed as an indicator of improved race relations (Qian, 1999; Qian & Lichter, 2007). In particular, Asian/White relationships are often viewed with more societal approval compared to other Black/White relationships (Field et al., 2013; Herman & Campbell, 2012; Perry, 2013), which has typically been interpreted as decreased social distance between Asian Americans and Whites, compared to other racial minority groups.

Little is known about how Asian Americans personally perceive, experience, and navigate race within interracial relationships, despite the sociohistorical context of racism in which these relationships are situated (E. Lee, 2015) and gendered patterns of interracial relationships (Qian & Lichter, 2007; Tsunokai et al., 2014). This gap in research is critical given the prevalence of Asian/White partnerships and the fact that many Asian Americans in interracial partnerships go on to be parents of multiracial Asian/White children (Livingston, 2017) and help their children navigate race and identity. It is important to first examine how Asian Americans navigate racial issues

within interracial partnerships and how the process of negotiating race relates to the Asian Americans' mental health and perceived relationship quality.

Thus, the goals of this dissertation study are to document Asian Americans' personal experiences of navigating racial differences in Asian/White interracial relationships, identify master narratives about race that are internalized within participants' accounts of navigating race, determine the extent to which master narratives about race are internalized by participants, and examine how internalization of master narratives relates to psychological adjustment and relationship quality.

Asian/White Relationships Through the Lens of AsianCrit

This study draws on Asian Critical Theory (Museus, 2013), or AsianCrit, to frame the sociopolitical, legal, and historical context in which Asian/White interracial relationships are situated. Drawn from Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017), AsianCrit acknowledges the persistence of structural, systemic racism in U.S. society and examines how the lived experiences of Asian Americans are shaped by racism. Relevant tenets of AsianCrit for this study include: (1) Asianization, or the distinct ways that Asian Americans are racialized and experience racism; (2) understanding how transnational contexts shape the racial experiences of Asian Americans; (3) strategic (anti)essentialism - recognizing Asian Americans' shared experiences of racial oppression as well as the diverse experiences among the Asian American population; (4) intersectionality - recognizing Asian Americans' experiences are shaped by the intersection of racism with other forms of oppression (Crenshaw, 1991); and (5) story, theory, and praxis - centering the stories of Asian Americans in shaping research and practice (Museus, 2013).

In the United States, interracial romantic relationships, including those between Asian Americans and Whites, exist within a broad historical context of White supremacy and racism. Historical social and legal resistance to interracial relationships between Whites and specific racial minority groups were driven by desire for White colonial plantation owners to maintain power, beliefs about the superiority of Whites, and desire to keep the White race "pure" (Cashin, 2017). Fears of race mixing between Blacks and Whites also extended to Asian/White interracial relationships. As Asian immigration increased in the 1800s, the Asian immigrant labor force was seen as an economic threat to Whites (E. Lee, 2015). Thus, Asian Americans were similarly viewed as a danger to White racial purity, and many states specifically banned Asian/White interracial marriage (Cashin, 2017).

The history of Asian Americans is complex given the many countries from which Asian Americans have migrated and the varying foreign relations that the United States has had with those countries over time. As this history is well-documented elsewhere in a more nuanced manner (E. Lee, 2015; Takaki, 1998), I provide a brief summary here. The AsianCrit tenets of Asianization and transnational contexts to demonstrate how this history has implications for Asian Americans' experiences of navigating race within Asian/White interracial relationships.

In the mid-1800s, the first large wave of Asian immigration to the United States began and consisted primarily of single Asian men coming as temporary laborers (Espiritu, 2007; Takaki, 1998). Over the course of the mid-1800s to early 1900s, waves of Asian men from various countries were recruited by United States capitalists to serve as a source of cheap labor. Immigration policies favored single men as temporary

migrants, creating views that Asian immigrants were in the United States just to work and then would eventually return home. In other words, Asian Americans were seen as perpetual foreigners. Relatedly, immigration policies excluded families and women, leading to the development of bachelor societies, or large communities of Asian American single men.

While capitalists and immigration law facilitated the migration of Asian men as temporary laborers, the growing Asian American contract labor force created resentment among Whites, who accused Asian Americans of taking jobs away from Whites by working for low wages (Takaki, 1998). In casting Asian Americans as "yellow peril," the foreignness of Asian Americans took on a more nefarious meaning: Asian Americans were viewed as morally degenerate, subhuman, foreign invaders who came to steal jobs away from Whites and threaten the democratic values of US society (Espiritu, 2007; Takaki, 1998). Furthermore, it was because of Asian Americans' supposed immoral and uncivilized nature that they were seen as ineligible for citizenship and inclusion in US society, thus ironically reinforcing the perpetual foreigner view.

Yellow peril also manifested in specific gendered fears of Asian American men and women. For example, the "moral degeneracy" of Chinese immigrants led to views of Chinese women as prostitutes who were corrupting US society (Espiritu, 2007). Consequently, the first ban on Asian immigration was directed at Chinese women. Asian American males, in turn, were viewed as hypersexual predators of White women (Espiritu, 2007). It is likely that these views of yellow peril and their gendered manifestations contributed to the banning of Asian/White interracial marriage discussed above (Cashin, 2017). Yellow peril became further institutionalized through the 1882

passage of the Chinese Exclusion Act, which banned Chinese immigration, followed by legislation banning immigration from India, Korea, Japan, and the Philippines (Espiritu, 2007).

Over time, views of Asian American males shifted from hypersexual to asexual or homosexual. This shift stemmed from the increase in bachelor societies described above and the increase of Asian American men in domestic labor-type jobs. As labor options for Asian American males grew increasingly restricted due to ethnic antagonism and fears of economic competition, they turned to available jobs in restaurants and laundries. Thus, Asian American males went from being seen as sexual threats to feminine or asexual (Espiritu, 2007; Takaki, 1998).

Animosity toward certain Asian American ethnic groups continued to persist through World War II. The Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, for example, and subsequent internment of Japanese Americans, reinforced the notion of yellow peril. At the same time, the US government demonstrated greater benevolence toward Chinese and Indian Americans due to being allied with China and wanting India's military cooperation, respectively (Takaki, 1998).

In 1965, the passage of the US Immigration and Nationality Act catalyzed the second wave of Asian immigration and facilitated the transformation of Asian Americans from the "yellow peril" to "model minorities." This law impacted Asian American migration in several ways, including: abolishing immigration quotas placed on Asian countries, promoting family reunification through migration, and selectively favoring skilled laborers (Espiritu, 2007; J. Lee & Zhou, 2015). The demographics of this second immigration wave were different from the first wave. Whereas the first wave mostly

consisted of single males and temporary laborers, the second wave included families migrating together with the goal of permanent settlement, as well as more educated Asian Americans (Espiritu, 2007). Thus, the structure and demographics of Asian American communities transformed from bachelor societies to having more families, and from working class laborers to middle class professionals.

In light of the concurring civil rights movement, the image of Asian Americans as the "model" minority was reinforced as a contrast to Blacks who were pursuing civil rights and fighting racism. Asian Americans' upward economic mobility was framed as stemming from their values for education, hard work, and family. However, this framing of Asian Americans promoted individual and cultural explanations of success (J. Lee & Zhou, 2015) and de-emphasized the role of structural factors such as immigration laws and racism.

Finally, as attitudes toward Asian Americans were shifting following World War II and into the civil rights era, gendered views of Asian Americans, particularly females, and views of Asian/White interracial relationships were concurrently influenced by media portrayals and US military intervention overseas. Following World War II, many American soldiers, including Whites, returned with Asian war brides (Espiritu, 2007). The continuation of US military intervention in South Korea and Southeast Asia also led to views of Asian women as military brides or prostitutes of White men (Nemoto, 2009). Thus, Asian women were frequently portrayed in media as sexualized, extending historical yellow peril narratives, or depicted as passive, submissive, and docile (Espiritu, 2007; Nemoto, 2009; Ono & Pham, 2009). In contrast to females, media portrayals

reinforced views of Asian American men as effeminate, emasculated, or sexually undesirable, a trend that continues to this day (Espiritu, 2007; Ono & Pham, 2009).

In sum, this brief history of Asian Americans demonstrates the process of Asianization and the role of transnational contexts in shaping views of Asian Americans as forever foreigners, yellow peril, or model minorities, as well as gendered stereotypes of Asian American women and men. This history further illustrates that Asian Americans experience race and racism in unique ways that may shape their experiences in interracial relationships with White partners. That is, despite increased societal acceptance of interracial relationships today (Livingston & Brown, 2017), Asian/White interracial couples are situated within a historical context of White supremacy which endures throughout society and privileges Whites over Asian Americans. This occurs not only on a societal level, but also on an interpersonal level. Specifically, for interracial couples, Asian American and White partners enter the relationship with differing levels of racial privilege and lived experiences with regard to race. Therefore, decreased societal stigma toward interracial relationships does not preclude the salience of race and racial differences within interracial relationships. However, there is limited research examining how Asian Americans negotiate this context of racism within an Asian/White relationship.

Previous Research on Asian/White Interracial Relationships

Navigating Race in Asian/White Interracial Relationships. There are few psychological studies of Asian Americans' experiences of navigating race, racism, and racial differences with interracial White partners. Notably, although there are some studies that focus on foreign-born Asian Americans married to White partners (J. Kim et

al., 2017; Rosenblatt & Stewart, 2004; Tili & Barker, 2015), these studies are excluded from the current literature review as they focus on how participants navigate cultural rather than racial differences. That is, the studies focus on cultural differences arising from the Asian American partner's migration and adjustment to American culture, but exclude the ways that couples may experience or navigate race. Instead, this review highlights studies that report Asian Americans' experiences within Asian/White interracial partnerships.

In a qualitative study of 10 Indian American/White heterosexual, married couples, both partners were interviewed individually about their perceptions of and lived experiences within their interracial relationship (Inman et al., 2011). White and Indian American partners alike reported some instances of initial disapproval or lack of social acceptance from families. Participants also reported experiences of discrimination or resistance in the public sphere, particularly in smaller towns. Seven Indian partners and five White partners reported an understanding of their marriage as intercultural, and there were four couples for whom both partners identified the relationships as intercultural. Consistent with their view of the marriage as intercultural, participants generally framed their similarities and differences in terms of cultural values and family upbringing. Fewer participants viewed their marriage as interracial; half of the Indian American participants and two White participants reported an understanding of their marriage as interracial, and there were no couples where both partners perceived the marriage as interracial. The participants who did acknowledge the interracial nature of their marriage generally framed their perception in terms of how their marriage was perceived by others,

suggesting a distinction between how others viewed them (i.e., interracial) and how they viewed themselves (i.e., intercultural).

In a qualitative study of nine Asian female/White male couples, AhnAllen and Suyemoto (2011) investigated how interracial dating impacted each partner's ethnic-racial identity development. In individual interviews, Asian American female partners reported increased appreciation for their ethnic heritage and confidence in their identity as a result of their interracial dating relationship, as well as increased acceptance of White perspectives and increased self-expression. White male partners reported a greater understanding of being White and awareness of White privilege due to dating an Asian American woman. White partners also reported greater awareness of systemic racism (including the racist behaviors of friends and family members) and greater understanding of the experiences of people of color.

Finally, in a qualitative study of racial microaggressions experienced by Japanese American women (N = 22) married to White men, Japanese American participants also reported about their experiences in an interracial relationship (Iwasaki et al., 2016). Participants reported experiences of discrimination from their partners' family and friends, name calling in public when seen with their White partners, and subtle racism from their White partners themselves. In addition, four participants reported that their White male partners minimized participants' experiences of discrimination. However, it is important to note that this study focused on participants' experiences of microaggressions broadly, thus it was not designed to focus on their experience of being in an interracial marriage.

While extremely limited, existing studies indicate that Asian Americans experience discrimination and stigma as part of an Asian/White couple but also on an individual basis. In addition, Asian Americans in interracial partnerships navigate differences in both culture and race. However, it is difficult to integrate findings across studies given the variability of samples with respect to ethnicity, stage of relationship, age, and level of representation of the experiences of Asian American males in interracial partnerships. In addition, these three existing studies focus on heterosexual Asian/White couples. Given the limited research on Asian Americans' experiences of navigating race in Asian/White interracial relationships, I review additional research on predictors of interracial relationships for Asian Americans and Asian Americans' interracial relationship quality. Though these additional studies do not directly address how Asian Americans navigate race in interracial relationships, they may provide relevant context on factors that inform the process of navigating race.

Factors Contributing to Asian/White Interracial Relationship Formation. There is a substantial body of research drawing from US Census data and nationally representative surveys demonstrating gender differences in interracial marriage among Asian Americans. Asian American women consistently marry interracially at higher rates than Asian American men (Qian, 1999; Qian et al., 2001; Qian & Lichter, 2007). Using data from online dating profiles, gender patterns of interracial dating have also been found. Asian American heterosexual women are more willing than Asian American heterosexual men to date Whites (Hwang, 2013; Tsunokai et al., 2014) and exclude Asian Americans from their racial mate preferences at a higher rate (Robnett & Feliciano, 2011). Furthermore, Asian American men are more likely to be excluded than Asian

American women in dating by opposite-sex Whites (Feliciano et al., 2009; Hwang, 2013).

Prior research has also identified other demographic and psychological correlates of interracial relationships for Asian Americans. There is some support for propinquity, particularly greater proximity to Whites in one's social network, in predicting greater likelihood of interracial marriage (Qian, 1999; Qian et al., 2001; Qian & Lichter, 2007) and interracial dating with a White partner (Fujino, 1997). Higher education and being native-born were also associated with greater likelihood of interracial marriage (Qian, 1999; Qian et al., 2001; Qian & Lichter, 2007).

There is mixed support for the role of culture in choosing an interracial partner, and the findings of previous studies are limited by sample size and statistical power. Previous studies found that perceptions of Whites as more attractive than Asian Americans and acculturation to US culture are associated with greater likelihood of dating a White partner (Mok, 1999) and openness toward interracial dating (Sklar et al., 2016) among Asian American emerging adults. Findings on parental influence are mixed, as one study found that closer relationships with parents was associated with decreased openness toward interracial dating (Sklar et al., 2016), whereas other found that parental influence and views on interracial dating were not significant predictors of interracial dating (Fujino, 1997; Mok, 1999).

Relationship Quality Among Asian/White Couples

There is a small body of research that is focused on comparing relationship quality between same-race and interracial couples or identifying predictors of relationship outcomes in interracial couples. Findings suggest that relationship quality does not differ

between interracial and same-race couples, in samples that include Asian/White couples in limited numbers but are not exclusively focused on Asian/White couples (Gurung & Duong, 1999; MacNeil & Adamsons, 2014; Troy et al., 2006).

There is some limited evidence that experiences specific to interracial dating, such as cultural conflict and stigma, are negatively associated with relationship quality. Among undergraduates (N = 155) in dating relationships with a partner of a different race or ethnicity, culturally-based ineffective arguing was associated with decreased relationship satisfaction and commitment. Both of these associations were partially mediated by lower perceptions of their partner's cultural humility (McElroy-Heltzel et al., 2018). In a separate study of adults in interracial and/or same-sex relationships (N = 480), relationship stigma from friends was associated with greater odds of intimate partner aggression victimization, and lower commitment, trust, love, and sexual communication. None of these findings differed based on interracial vs. same-sex relationship status (Rosenthal & Starks, 2015). While both of these studies included Asian American participants, it is unclear how many of them were in Asian/White interracial relationships.

In general, the limited research findings suggest that there are no differences in relationship quality between same-race and interracial couples. However, for interracial couples, relationship quality may be negatively associated with cultural factors and societal stigma, which lends credence to the importance of studying Asian/White couples with regard to the societal and structural contexts in which these couples are situated.

Theoretical Framework: Master Narrative Framework

The brief review of Asian American history above illustrates the context of structural and systemic racism in which Asian Americans navigate race in Asian/White interracial relationships. In addition, prior research offers some evidence that the broader structural context of racism informs Asian Americans' personal experiences within interracial relationships. As such, in studying how Asian Americans navigate race in interracial relationships, it is important to utilize frameworks that address the way Asian Americans' personal experiences are impacted by structural factors.

The *master narrative framework* is a structural-psychological framework that integrates cultural context into the study of personal narratives, or individual-level life stories (McLean & Syed, 2015; Syed & McLean, 2020). *Narratives* are evolving life stories that integrate one's past, present, and future in a way that gives unity, purpose, and meaning to one's life (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Personal narratives are shaped by master and alternative narratives. *Master narratives* are dominant societal stories that shape individuals' thoughts, beliefs, and actions, while *alternative narratives* are stories that develop in resistance to master narratives (McLean & Syed, 2015). For example, a common master narrative in American society is the "American Dream," which has endured for generations as a societal script guiding individuals' aspirations of economic success, homeownership, and family formation. Specifically, master narratives are defined by five principles: (a) utility - they function as a template for how individuals should understand themselves and the norms of groups in society; (b) ubiquity - they are dominant ideas within a culture; (c) invisibility - they are unconscious among mainstream/dominant society due to their ubiquity; (d) compulsory nature - those who do

not align with master narratives experience negative consequences (e.g., marginalization); and (e) rigidity - they are sustained over time (McLean & Syed, 2015). In sum, master narratives provide a "menu of stories" that prescribe how personal narratives, or individual life stories, should be structured (McAdams & Pals, 2006; McLean & Syed, 2015).

Personal narratives develop in an interactive process between society and individuals. Individuals may *internalize* master narratives, thus aligning their personal narratives with master narratives. Individuals can also engage in *negotiation,* whereby they balance a sense of belonging to society with their own sense of self; in doing so, they may align with or create alternative narratives. While personal narratives interact with both master and alternative narratives, one's specific narrative will depend on the extent to which one aligns with the master and alternative narratives. Master and alternative narratives are strengthened as they are internalized within personal narratives. In addition, master and alternative narratives interact with each other; although alternative narratives develop in resistance to master narratives, the existence of alternative narratives may reinforce master narratives (McLean & Syed, 2015).

Previous research using the master narrative framework demonstrates that it can be flexibly applied to structural-psychological research with various topics and populations (Syed & McLean, 2020), suggesting that it is a feasible and appropriate theoretical framework for studying how Asian Americans navigate race and racial differences in Asian/White interracial relationships. Not only does the master narrative framework allow for the examination of structural-individual relations, the framework's

focus on personal narrative is consistent with the AsianCrit tenet of using stories from Asian Americans to build theory on Asian/White interracial relationships.

Two common master narratives in American society are relevant to Asian Americans' personal narratives of interracial relationships: White supremacy and the American dream. These master narratives emerge from the historical context of Asian Americans described above. First, the dominant, enduring narrative of Whites as culturally and intellectually superior to other racial groups has manifested in: essentialist views of race that stigmatize interracial relationships; historic institutional bans on intermarriage, including Asian/White intermarriage (Cashin, 2017); views of Asian Americans as perpetual foreigners (Takaki, 1998); gendered racial stereotypes of Asian American men and women (Keum, Brady, et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2018); and Asian Americans' views of Whites as more attractive (Choi et al., 2017).

Second, the American Dream narrative posits that hard work will lead to the fulfillment of aspirations such as economic success, homeownership, and family formation. This narrative manifests in racial colorblind beliefs that deny the relevance of race in societal power structures and interpersonal relations (Neville et al., 2000, 2013), including in interracial relationships (Brummett, 2017). The American Dream narrative also manifests in views of Asian Americans as model minorities (Chao et al., 2013).

Both the White supremacy and American Dream master narratives have implications for Asian Americans' potential narratives of being in an interracial relationship and navigating race. According to the master narrative framework, individuals may potentially align with aspects of these master narratives, recognize the

implications of the narratives for their relationships, or resist master narratives by aligning with alternative narratives.

Beyond identifying the content of master and alternative narratives and the processes by which master, alternative, and personal narratives shape each other, the master alternative framework suggests that internalization of master or alternative narratives has implications for individuals' mental health and well-being. That is, the definition of master narratives as dominant cultural stories suggests that deviating from or failing to conform to the master narrative may be associated with greater distress and feelings of inadequacy (McLean & Syed, 2015). There is some empirical support for the idea that internalization of alternative narratives is associated with decreased well-being. In a college student sample, participant narratives about traditional gender roles or gender equality (i.e., master narratives) were rated as more positively valenced than participant narratives about gender inequality and sexism (i.e., alternative narrative; McLean et al., 2017). This finding suggests that alignment with master narratives may be less distressing. Thus, the current study includes exploratory questions about the implications of master and alternative narrative internalization for Asian Americans' psychological and relationship well-being.

The Present Study

Drawing from the master narrative framework and incorporating an AsianCrit perspective, historical context, and previous research on Asian/White interracial relationships, the broad goals of the current study were to examine Asian Americans' experiences within Asian/White interracial relationships, as well as examine the influence society exerts over Asian Americans' personal narratives of navigating race within these

relationships. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions (RQ):

Research Question 1: What are Asian Americans' personal narratives about being in Asian/White interracial relationships?

Given the paucity of research on the experiences of Asian Americans in Asian/White interracial relationships, particularly their experiences of navigating race and racial differences, this qualitative research question aimed to describe Asian Americans' experiences within these romantic partnerships. Drawing from AsianCrit tenets of strategic (anti)essentialism and intersectionality, I aimed to recruit a diverse Asian American sample to increase representation of the breadth of narratives of Asian Americans in Asian/White interracial relationship, thus building on the limitations of prior qualitative research which have focused on Asian female/White male relationships or specific Asian ethnicities. I expected that my findings for this question would be similar to themes identified in previous research on the ways that Asian/White couples navigate race, ethnicity, and culture (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011; Inman et al., 2011).

Research Question 2: What master and alternative narratives are present in participants' personal narratives about being in Asian/White interracial relationships?

This qualitative research question aimed to identify and describe the societal structures, namely master and alternative narratives, that participants internalized in their accounts of addressing race and racial differences in their relationships. I expected to find master narratives that related to narratives of White supremacy (e.g., perpetual foreigner stereotype, gendered racial stereotypes of Asian Americans) and the American dream

(e.g., model minority myth, racial colorblindness). Given lack of prior research on master narratives and Asian Americans in interracial relationships, I did not have hypotheses or expectations regarding potential alternative narratives. In addition, I expected to identify a total of four narratives from the data, including both master and alternative narratives, on previous qualitative research on master narratives (McLean et al., 2017; Moffitt et al., 2018; Rogers, 2018).

Research Question 3: To what extent do Asian Americans internalize master and alternative narratives in their personal narratives about being in Asian/White interracial relationships?

This quantitative research question aimed to determine the extent to which participants endorsed master and alternative narratives about navigating race within their personal narratives of being in Asian/White interracial relationships. Consistent with the definition of master narratives as dominant societal stories (McLean & Syed, 2015), I expected that participants would have stronger internalization of master narratives compared to any alternative narratives that were identified.

Research Question 4: How is internalization of master and alternative narratives related to constructs of the expected master narratives? Which narratives are associated with relationship and psychological adjustment outcomes?

The first part of this research question served as a validity check for the coding of master narratives and any alternative narratives in the previous research question. I expected that if I identified master narratives related to White supremacy and the American dream, internalization scores of master narratives would positively correlate

with measures of constructs related to those themes (appropriated racial oppression, racial color-blindness, and internalization of the model minority myth, respectively).

The second part of this research question was exploratory and aimed to understand whether master and alternative narratives related to various psychological and relationship outcomes (relationship quality, psychological distress, social belonging, ethnic-racial identity). I did not have specific hypotheses for this part of the research question due its exploratory nature and the fact that the analyses for this question depended on the findings for the previous two research questions (RQ2 and RQ3).

Method

Participants

A total of 189 participants completed the study. Participant ages ranged from 18 to 34 years old (M = 22.7, SD = 3.8) for those who reported age (n = 178). Seventy-five percent of participants identified as cisgender female, 24% identified as cisgender male, and less than 1% identified as gender non-conforming/non-binary/agender/genderqueer. Participants reported their sexual orientation as heterosexual or straight (80%), gay or lesbian (3%), bisexual (8%), pansexual (2%), queer (2%), demisexual (<1%), asexual (1%), prefer not to answer (<1%), and not listed (3%), with 1% of participants who did not indicate a response.

Participants identified their Asian ethnicities[1] as Chinese (36%), Vietnamese (23%), Indian (14%), Korean (12%), Filipino (6%), Taiwanese (6%), Hmong (5%), Japanese (3%), Cambodian (3%), Malaysian (2%), Hong Kong (1%), Burmese (1%),

[1] Participants reported ethnicity in an open-ended response format (see Appendix C). Ethnicity responses were recoded as categorical variables in the data. Percentages for ethnic heritage add up to more than 100% as some participants reported multiple Asian ethnicities.

Indonesian (1%), Lao (<1%), Uyghur (<1%), and Tibetan (<1%). In addition, 14% of participants identified with two or more races, including Asian American.

In terms of nativity, 77% of participants were born in the United States and 23% were born outside of the United States. Of the U.S.-born participants, 83% indicated that both their parents were foreign-born, 15% had one U.S.-born and one foreign-born parent, and less than 1% indicated that both parents were U.S.-born and all grandparents were foreign-born. Of the foreign-born participants, 35% migrated between 0-12 months of age, 40% migrated between 1-5 years old, and 25% migrated between 6-10 years. The foreign-born participants included 16 participants (37% of foreign-born participants; 8% of overall sample) who were transracially adopted (i.e., having at least one adoptive parent of a different race).

Participants described their family income level when growing up as "it varied" (12%), "poor" (16%), "about average" (35%), and "pretty well off financially" (37%). Participants described their current personal finances as "don't meet basic needs" (<1%), "just meet basic expenses" (9%), "meet needs with a little left" (30%), and "I live comfortably" (60%). Participants reported their education level as less than high school degree (<1%), high school diploma or equivalent (12%), some college (39%), associate's degree (4%), bachelor's degree (30%), master's degree (6%), and professional or doctoral degree (8%). The majority of the sample (71%) identified as current students who reported enrollments at the level of high school (<1%), undergraduate (80%), graduate (11%), or professional student (7%).

Participants indicated their current relationship status as "in a current relationship with one partner" (92%), engaged (6%), or married (2%). Participants reported that their

total relationship length ranged from 5 months to 6.25 years (M_{years} = 2.1, SD_{years} = 1.4). The majority (62%) of participants indicated having previously been in a relationship with a different White partner, with 38% of overall participants reporting multiple previous relationships with White partners.

Sampling Procedures

Eligibility Criteria. Participants were eligible if they met the following criteria: 1) Identify as Asian American, 2) Are between 18-35 years of age, 3) Born in the U.S. or immigrated to the U.S. at or before age 10, 4) Currently in a committed romantic relationship (e.g., dating, married) with one partner, 5) Race of current romantic partner is White/European American, 6) Length of the current relationship is between 6 months and 5 years, and 7) Not currently raising any children.

Potential participants who expressed interest in the study completed a brief survey to assess their eligibility. From October - December 2019 and March 6, 2020 - May 2020, potential participants completed the prescreening survey online and had their answers screened by a trained undergraduate research assistant. During January - March 6, 2020, potential participants complete the prescreening survey in-person in a lab setting. Trained undergraduate research assistants reviewed participants' prescreening results and determined participant eligibility.

Recruitment. Participants were primarily recruited from a large, public university in the Midwest. Recruitment channels included participant pools in the psychology department and business school; course announcements (e.g., psychology, ethnic studies, Asian languages); targeted emails sent to students, Asian American cultural student organizations, and campus offices serving Asian American students; flyers posted in

campus buildings and local businesses near campus; and flyers distributed at events sponsored by Asian American cultural organizations. Recruitment announcements and flyers were also sent to student organizations and select course instructors at a local community college. All recruitment materials directed potential participants to complete the online prescreening survey or sign up for an in-person prescreening and data collection time.

Incentives. From October 2019 - March 6, 2020, participants were offered their choice of either a $10 Amazon eGift card or extra credit for psychology courses as an incentive for participation. After March 6, 2020, the Amazon eGift card option was increased to $25, while the extra credit option remained the same.

Human Subjects Approval. All study procedures were approved by the IRB at the University of Minnesota (Protocol: STUDY00006916) and North Hennepin Community College (Protocol: 200228_Matchinsky).

Power Analysis

Using G*Power 3.1, I conducted an a priori power analysis to determine the necessary sample size for planned multiple linear regression analyses in this study. The parameters of the power analysis were set at $\alpha = .05$, $f^2 = .06$, and number of estimated predictors $k = 4$. The expected effect size of $f^2 = .06$ was estimated from correlations in the narrative literature and studies of constructs (e.g., racial colorblindness, appropriated racial oppression) related to expected themes. I extracted correlations between narrative coding scores and well-being measures and between related constructs and well-being measures, then averaged the absolute values of extracted correlations to obtain an effect size estimate of $r = .25$ (which corresponds to $f^2 = .06$. Using these parameters, the power

analysis indicated that the regression analyses would have 60% power with $N = 127$, 65% power with $N = 140$, 70% power with $N = 154$, 75% power with $N = 170$, and 80% power with $N = 189$. I attempted to recruit up to 200 participants to have 80% power and account for the fact that some participants may have been inattentive or provided minimal responses to the written prompts.

Procedure and Data Collection

Participants completed a Qualtrics survey lasting approximately 1 hour. The survey consisted of a consent form (see Appendix A), written narrative prompts, quantitative measures, and a demographics section (see Measures). Data collection occurred in person for approximately the first five months of the study, given recommendations that in-person collection of written narrative data yields better quality data (Adler et al., 2017). However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all in-person research activities were suspended at the institution where data collection occurred, and data collection was conducted remotely for the remainder of the study. Regardless of setting (i.e., in-person vs. remote), all research assistants involved in data collection used a standardized script to provide participant instructions.

Prior to COVID-19 Pandemic. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (October 2019 - March 6, 2020), participants ($n = 51$) completed the Qualtrics survey in person, either in a lab setting or in a private room. In both spaces, participants were observed by an undergraduate research assistant who was available to answer questions, assist with any technical issues with the survey, and ensure participants were focused on taking the survey.

During COVID-19 Pandemic. Following March 6, 2020, participants (n = 138) completed the online survey on their own personal electronic device while being remotely proctored by an undergraduate research assistant through Zoom video conferencing, in order to simulate the in-person data collection experience. As with in-person data collection, the undergraduate research assistant was available on Zoom to answer questions, assist with any technical issues with the survey, and remind participants to focus on taking the survey (e.g., asking participants to move to a quiet space away from environmental distractions or interruptions). Research assistants turned on their microphones and videos while speaking to participants and giving instructions, and then muted themselves and turned off their video camera when the participants were taking the survey. Participants were asked to keep their audio and video on while taking the survey to simulate the in-person data collection experience and so research assistants could make note of any major environmental distractions.

Measures

Narrative Prompts. Participants completed five open-ended written narrative prompts about: 1) the history of their relationship (adapted from Syed et al., 2014), 2) an experience where their relationship deviated from the norm (adapted from McLean et al., 2018), 3) an experience where race or racial differences came up in their relationship, 4) an experience where ethnicity, culture, or ethnic/cultural differences came up in their relationship, and 5) how their interracial relationship is viewed by others. Participants also provided written responses to an additional open-ended prompt inviting them to share any additional thoughts regarding their experience of being in an interracial relationship with a White partner. These prompts were piloted using a sample of

undergraduate students in summer 2019 and revised according to participant feedback. Additional feedback was provided by colleagues and personal contacts who are in interracial relationships. Full prompts are located in Appendix B.

Relationship Quality. Relationship quality was measured using the Perceived Relationship Quality Components (PRQC) Inventory (Fletcher et al., 2000). The full 18-item inventory consists of six 3-item subscales measuring relationship satisfaction, commitment, intimacy, trust, passion, and love. For this study, one item per subscale was chosen to include in the data collection, for a total of 6 scale items (Marshall et al., 2013). A sample item is "How committed are you to your relationship?" Items were rated on a scale of 1 ("Not at all") to 7 ("Extremely"). Items were mean-scored to create a global mean index of relationship quality. Cronbach's alpha was .86.

Psychological Distress. Psychological distress was measured by the Kessler-6 scale (Kessler et al., 2003), a 6-item measure of psychological distress that taps into symptoms of depression and anxiety. A sample item is "During the past 30 days, about how often did you feel restless or fidgety?" Items were rated from 1 ("All of the time") to 5 ("None of the time"). Items were mean-scored to create an index of psychological distress. Cronbach's alpha was .82.

Social Belonging. Achieved social belongingness was measured by the 12-item General Belongingness Scale (Malone et al., 2012). The Acceptance/Inclusion subscale (6 items) measures feelings of belonging, connection, and acceptance by others (e.g., "I feel connected with others"). The Rejection/Exclusion subscale (6 items) measures feelings of isolation and exclusion by others (e.g., "I feel like an outsider"). Items were rated from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 7 ("Strongly agree"). The Rejection/Exclusion

items were reverse-scored and then averaged with the Acceptance/Inclusion items to create a total mean score of social belonging (Malone et al., 2012). Cronbach's alpha was .91.

Ethnic-Racial Identity. A modified version of the Ethnic Identity Scale - Brief Version (EIS-B; Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2015; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004) was used to measure ethnic-racial identity. The original EIS-B (Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2015) contains 9 items that measure three subscales of ethnic-racial identity: Exploration (3 items) taps into an individual's behavioral engagement with their ethnic-racial background, Resolution (3 items) taps into an individual's cognitive clarity regarding the meaning of their ethnic-racial background, and Affirmation (3 items) taps into an individual's affect toward their ethnic-racial background using negatively worded items (e.g., "I dislike my racial/ethnic background). In addition to these 9 items, three positively worded Affirmation items (e.g., "I feel positively about my racial/ethnic background") were written based on the negatively worded Affirmation items in the original EIS-B. Thus a total of 12 items measuring ethnic-racial identity were included in the survey. Items were rated from 1 ("Does not describe me at all") to 4 ("Describes me very well").

Though the study preregistration planned for all 12 items to be used in the analyses, the final analyses included only the positive and negative Affirmation items. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the six Affirmation items suggested two factors, as did Velicer's minimum average partial (MAP) test (O'Connor, 2000; Velicer, 1976). However, examination of the factors from the EFA suggested that a one-factor solution was plausible, as all items loaded above .6 on the first factor and absolute values of factor

loadings on the second factor ranged from .25 to .46. It appeared that the first factor captured ethnic-racial identity affirmation, whereas the second factor captured differences in positively or negatively worded items. Thus, a mean score of ethnic-racial identity affirmation was calculated using all six Affirmation items (with negatively worded items reverse-scored). Cronbach's alpha was .87.

Racial Color-Blindness. Racial color-blindness was measured by the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville et al., 2000). The CoBRAS consists of 20 items across three subscales measuring denial of racial privilege (e.g., "Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not," reverse-scored), denial of institutional discrimination (e.g., "Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people"), and denial of blatant racial issues (e.g., Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations). Items were rated from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 6 ("Strongly agree"). Items were mean-scored across subscales to create a total mean score of racial colorblindness (Keum, Miller, et al., 2018). Cronbach's alpha was .87.

Appropriated Racial Oppression. Appropriated racial oppression was measured by the Appropriated Racial Oppression Scale (AROS; Campón & Carter, 2015) and one subscale from the Internalized Racism in Asian Americans Scale (IRAAS; Choi et al., 2017). The AROS contains four subscales: Emotional Responses (7 items; sample item: "I feel critical about my racial group"), American Standard of Beauty (5 items; sample item: "I find persons with lighter skin-tones to be more attractive"), Devaluation of Own Group (8 items; sample item: "I wish I were not a member of my race"), and Patterns of Thinking (3 items; sample item: "People take racial jokes too seriously"). One item from the original American Standard of Beauty subscale ("Good hair (i.e., straight) is better)

was omitted from the current study as it is not content valid for Asian Americans. In addition, the 4-item Appearance Bias subscale of the IRAAS was included due to its content validity for Asian Americans (sample item: “Asians are less physically attractive than Whites). All items were rated from 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 7 (“Strongly agree”).

The preregistration planned to calculate a total mean score of appropriated racial oppression using all items from both the AROS and IRAAS. However, an exploratory factor analysis of AROS and IRAAS items did not support the use of a total mean score that combined both measures. Thus, the IRAAS items were excluded from the final analysis. Items were mean-scored across AROS subscales to create a total scale score of appropriated racial oppression (Campón & Carter, 2015). Cronbach’s alpha was .90.

Internalization of the Model Minority Myth. Internalization of the model minority myth was measured by the Internalization of the Model Minority Myth Measure (IM-4; Yoo et al., 2010). The IM-4 consists of 15 items across 2 subscales. The Achievement Orientation subscale (10 items) measures beliefs that Asian Americans have greater success, relative to other racial minority groups, due to work ethic and achievement orientation (e.g., “Asian Americans have stronger work ethics”). The Unrestricted Mobility subscale (5 items) measures beliefs that Asian Americans experience less racism or racial barriers, compared to other racial minority groups (e.g., “Asian Americans are more likely to be treated as equals to European Americans”). Items were rated from 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 7 (“Strongly agree”). Items were mean-scored within each subscale to create scores of Achievement Orientation and Unrestricted Mobility (Yoo et al., 2010). Cronbach’s alpha was .92 for Achievement Orientation and .87 for Unrestricted Mobility.

Data Cleaning

Participants Not Meeting Eligibility Criteria. Although all participants were screened for eligibility prior to completing the survey, some participants noted different responses for demographic information (e.g., relationship length, partner race) that were different from what was originally stated in their prescreening survey. In addition, responses to the question about partner race indicated that some participants reported their partners identified with more than one race when taking the actual survey, but reported that their partners were monoracial White when completing the prescreening. Given statistical power considerations, these participants were retained in the sample as participants' qualitative responses indicated that they viewed their partners as monoracial White.

Missing Data. Less than 1% of quantitative data was missing at the item level. All scale or subscale means were calculated for individuals who had complete item-level data. After calculating scales, less than 1% of quantitative data was missing at the scale level (i.e., four participants were missing a scale mean on a unique scale). Expectation maximization was used to impute the four missing scale scores (Schlomer et al., 2010).

Inattentive Responding. Four items (e.g., "Please select 'disagree'") were included in the survey to identify inattentive responding (Meade & Craig, 2012). Previous findings have suggested that removing participants on the basis of failing to correctly answer inattentive response items may introduce bias to results (Anduiza & Galais, 2016; Berinsky et al., 2014). As such, the quantitative analyses were conducted twice based on different attention levels (Berinsky et al., 2014). Analyses first included all participants regardless of their response to careless response items, then included only

participants who completed at least two attentive response items correctly. Using this criteria, three participants (2%) were identified as inattentive responders.

Analyses

All analyses for this study were preregistered using the Open Science Framework (https://osf.io/t2mf7/?view_only=803de87f10724d36bef48b7cdfc85e43). All analyses described are consistent with preregistration unless otherwise noted.

Qualitative Analytic Team. The analytic team for qualitative analyses (RQ1 and RQ2) included the study author and four research assistants[2] (RAs). All research assistants had also assisted with data collection and were familiar with the study goals and procedure. Prior to beginning thematic analysis, RAs were trained by reading relevant literature on thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and previous qualitative studies that used this procedure. RAs also read relevant literature on specific Asian American subpopulations (transracial adoptees, sexual minorities, Multiracials) that were represented in the sample.

Prior to beginning thematic analysis, the analytic team engaged in a reflexivity discussion to identify values, identities, beliefs, and life experiences that they brought to the analytic process (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Levitt et al., 2017). The study author identified as a second-generation Chinese American and Asian American woman. The research assistants identified as a Black/Multiracial woman, a Taiwanese woman and international student, a 1.5-generation (i.e., immigrated to the United States as a child)

[2] Five undergraduate research assistants were initially involved in qualitative data analysis. However, one research assistant was unable to continue beyond the generation of initial codes due to other commitments and did not participate in an extensive portion of data analysis. Another undergraduate research assistant began a master's program during the analytic process but remained on the team. Thus, I use the term "research assistants" to describe both undergraduate and graduate students who were involved in coding.

Vietnamese American woman, and a 1.5-generation Cambodian American man. In addition to discussing identities, the team discussed previous experiences with interracial dating and values related to race and diversity. Team members were encouraged to practice reflexivity throughout the analytic process through coding memos and regular team discussions.

Thematic Analysis for RQ 1. The analysis for the first research question used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to create a descriptive, detailed account of participants' personal experiences within interracial relationships. An inductive (i.e., data-driven) approach was used to identify themes in the data, rather than approaching analysis with pre-existing codes or themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analytic team conducted analyses based on the process described by Braun and Clarke (2006). The preregistration stated that analytic choices about coding data at the semantic or latent level (Braun & Clarke, 2006) would be made after reading through the data.

First, the analytic team immersed themselves in the data by reading through all participant responses to the written open-ended prompts. The team decided to code data at the latent level, that is, inferring participant intent and meaning rather than interpreting data at face value. This decision was made because the study was focused on participants' experiences of navigating race, with the understanding of race as a social construct connected to systems of power and oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). As participants often referred to race, ethnicity, and culture interchangeably (e.g., using the term "race" to refer to concepts that are actually related to ethnicity or culture), it was important to code references to race, ethnicity, and culture data in a latent manner rather than coding at the semantic level.

Second, the analytic team read through the data again and generated initial codes for data extracts pertaining to RQ 1. Given the sample size, participant data was divided up so that each participant's set of responses was read and coded by two members of the analytic team. Third, initial codes were collated across team members. Team members developed an initial set of themes based on the codes through concept mapping and team discussion, as well as feedback from the study author's advisor. The analytic team then re-coded the data using the initial set of themes. Again, each participant set of responses was coded by two team members, and data were coded inclusively (i.e., coded within multiple themes when relevant). Coding pairs met to resolve coding discrepancies by consensus. Fourth, the study author and a subset of research assistants (a Black/Multiracial woman, a Taiwanese woman) read through coded data extracts to ensure that the thematic structure fit the data, and they refined themes and coding as needed.

Following this process, the study author independently read through coded data extracts again and developed a new set of themes that described the data in a more cohesive manner. This new set of themes identified common societal messages about race, ethnicity, and Asian/White interracial relationships that were present across participants' various interactions. The study author discussed the themes with her advisor and defined the themes. Notably, though the steps of thematic analysis were described in a linear fashion, they occurred in an iterative, recursive manner (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic Analysis for RQ 2. The analysis for the second research question focused specifically on creating a detailed account of master and alternative narratives of navigating race and racial differences that participants internalized in their personal

narratives of Asian/White interracial relationships. Analyses used a modified version of the thematic analysis procedures described for the first research question. First, the study author and a subset of research assistants (a Black/Multiracial woman, a Taiwanese woman) generated ideas about potential master and alternative narratives as they read through coded data in step 4 of the analyses for research question 1. The team discussed common themes, and the study author developed a preliminary list of potential master and alternative narratives from this discussion. Second, the study author and another subset of research assistants (a Vietnamese American woman, a Cambodian American man) read through the data using the preliminary list identified in the first step, identified additional potential master or alternative narratives, and coded relevant data extracts that exemplified the potential narratives. Third, the study author and research assistants refined the list of narratives and named and defined the final narratives. Master and alternative narratives were named using a theoretically informed inductive approach, where master and alternative narratives were identified in a data-driven manner using the coded extracts, but the naming and operationalization of master and alternative narratives was informed by theory (Syed & Nelson, 2015).

Narrative Coding for RQ3. For the third research question, written qualitative data was using narrative coding, a quantitative analysis procedure for qualitative data. Based on the master and alternative narratives identified in the second research question, the study author developed a 4-point scale (McLean et al., 2018) that represented the degree to which participants internalized narratives within their written responses (see Appendix D). Then the study author developed a coding manual with definitions and examples of each narrative at different levels of the scale. Although the preregistration

indicated that the unit of analysis would be each separate written response (i.e., each of the 6 open-ended written responses from a participant), the study author decided to assign one holistic code for all written responses from any given participant. This decision was made for several reasons. First, the last open-ended question was optional, so not all participants provided a response for this question. Second, participants shared information in some responses that provided greater context for other responses.

Narrative coding followed the "master coder" procedure (Syed & Nelson, 2015). The study author (i.e., master coder) coded all participant responses, and these codes were used as the final codes in subsequent analyses. Two research assistants (a Vietnamese American woman, a Cambodian American man) served as reliability coders who coded 20% of participant responses to establish interrater reliability. That is, each research assistant coded a unique subsample of responses to establish interrater reliability with the study author. Though the preregistration indicated that percent agreement, kappa, and delta would be used as indices of interrater reliability, the final analyses used intraclass correlations (ICCs) which are more appropriate for ordinal data as ICCs measure similarity in coding rather than simple agreement (Syed & Nelson, 2015).

The reliability coders were trained using procedures described by Adler and colleagues (2017) and Syed and Nelson (2015). Coders read through the coding manual and provided feedback. Next, the study author and coders practiced coding together in meetings, discussed their rationale for codes, and further refined the coding manual based on feedback. Then, the study author and coders were assigned randomly selected portions of data to code independently for practice, and the study author calculated intraclass correlations for practice coding (i.e., intraclass correlations between the study author and

each coder). The study author and coders discussed codes with low intraclass correlations and refined the coding manual accordingly. This training process continued until intraclass correlations met the acceptable threshold of .75 or higher (Cicchetti, 1994; Orwin, 1994). Less than 25% of participant responses were used in this training phase. Finally, participant responses were randomly assigned to each coder for formal reliability coding.

Quantitative analyses for RQ4. Data analyses for the final research question occurred in two steps. First, as a validity check of coding in RQ3, Pearson correlations were calculated between master and alternative narrative internalization scores and racial colorblindness, the internalization of the model minority myth subscales, and appropriated racial oppression. Second, multiple linear regressions were conducted to answer the exploratory research question of how internalization of master and alternative narratives is associated with primary outcome variables (relationship quality, psychological distress, ethnic-racial identity, and social belonging). A total of four regressions were conducted, where each primary outcome variable was the dependent variable regressed on the master and alternative narratives identified in RQ3. The correlation and regression analyses were also repeated on a smaller subsample (n = 186) of participants that excluded those identified as inattentive responders (n = 3).

Results

Research Question 1: Cultural Socialization and Racial Tropes

Using thematic analysis, I identified common cultural socialization messages (Hughes et al., 2006) that were reported in participants' narratives about being in Asian/White interracial relationships. Cultural socialization refers broadly to the

transmission of beliefs, values, and traditions related to race, ethnicity, and culture (Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2016). Participants described cultural socialization received from family, as well as other sources (e.g., friends, partner, social media), about interracial dating and Asian/White interracial relationships. The results of this research question describe the broader societal messages about race, ethnicity, and culture and Asian/White interracial relationships that are communicated to participants.

Notably, the current results differ from the phrasing and original intent of this research question. This research question was intended to create a detailed, descriptive account of participants' various experiences within Asian/White interracial relationships, such as interactions with participants' and partners' families and specific experiences of navigating race and culture. However, thematic analyses identified that cultural socialization messages were a common element across various interactions and experiences, highlighting the role of structural and societal factors in shaping individual experiences (Syed & McLean, 2020). As such, a cultural socialization perspective provides a more cohesive manner of presenting the results.

The results of this first research question remain distinct from those of the second research question. The current results for the first research question describe cultural socialization messages about race, ethnicity, culture, and Asian/White interracial relationships that are communicated to participants. Participants received these societal messages, though they may not necessarily agree with such messages. In contrast, the results of second research question describe master narratives, or dominant societal stories, that participants internalized in their understanding of being in an Asian/White interracial relationship. In other words, the current results describe societal messages

communicated by others to participants, whereas the next set of results describe dominant societal stories *internalized* by participants. As the results of the first and second research question are related, yet distinct, the results are illustrated together in Figure 1. Table 1 includes crosstabs and descriptive statistics of demographic characteristics of participants who reported themes pertaining to this research question.

Figure 1

Summary of Thematic Analysis Results for Research Questions 1 and 2

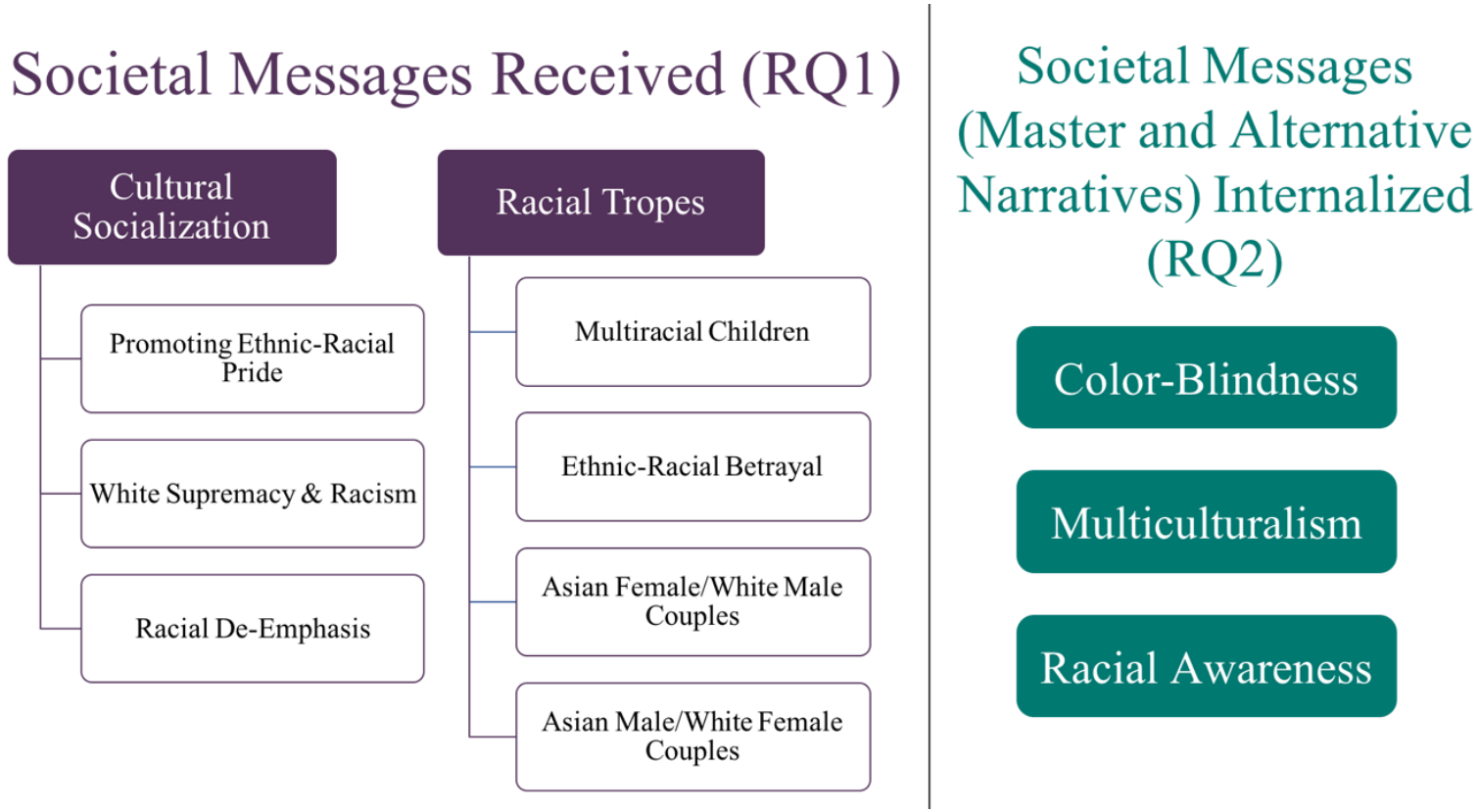

Table 1

Frequency of Themes and Descriptive Statistics Among Participants Referencing Cultural Socialization and Racial Tropes

	Cultural Socialization			Racial Tropes			
	Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride	White Supremacy and Racism	Racial De-Emphasis	Multiracial Children	Ethnic-Racial Betrayal	Asian Female/ White Male	Asian Male/ White Female
Total References[a] (#)	159	156	222	15	27	74	24
Overall Unique Participant References (%)	49	52	70	6	14	28	11
Gender[b] (%)							
Cisgender Male	50	52	70	9	0	0	37
Cisgender Female	48	53	70	6	18	37	2
Multiracial[c] (%)	31	54	77	12	4	8	8
Transracial Adoptees (%)	25	69	88	19	13	44	12
Nativity (%)							
U.S.-Born	51	51	71	5	15	27	12
Foreign-Born[d]	48	48	59	4	7	22	4
Generation Status[e] (%)							
2nd Generation	56	50	69	5	17	30	13
2.5 Generation	27	59	77	9	5	14	5
Previous White Partners (%)							
None	49	46	66	4	13	25	8
One or more	48	56	73	8	14	30	12
Age (Years)							
M	22.8	22.4	22.8	20.2	22.3	23.5	24.8
SD	4.3	3.8	3.8	2.7	3.3	3.5	5.0
Relationship Length (Years)							
M	2.0	2.3	2.1	1.4	1.8	2.0	1.8
SD	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.3

[a] Total count includes participants who with multiple references to the same theme. [b] Participants who identified as gender non-conforming/non-binary/agender/genderqueer were excluded from table due to low cell count preventing aggregate data reporting. [c] Participants who indicated their race as Asian American and another racial group. [d] Excludes foreign-born participants who indicated they were transracially adopted. [e] 2nd Generation is defined as participants who indicated that both parents were foreign-born. 2.5 Generation is defined as participants who indicated having one U.S.-born and one foreign-born parent. U.S.-born participants who described their generation status outside of 2nd or 2.5 generation were excluded from table due to low cell count preventing aggregate data reporting.

Cultural Socialization Messages. Participants' responses described receiving three cultural socialization messages that pertained to Asian/White interracial relationships. The messages were characterized as Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride, White Supremacy and Racism, and Racial De-Emphasis.

Through interactions with their partners and others, participants received and contended with various messages about interracial relationships that demonstrate the complexity, nuance, and at times, paradoxical nature of how Asian/White interracial relationships are perceived. These cultural socialization messages and tropes illustrate how acceptance of, or opposition to, interracial relationships is motivated by various factors, and also demonstrate how intersectionality impacts participants' experiences of navigating societal messages about race and culture within their relationships.

Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride. Participants described expectations of choosing a partner of the same ethnicity or race from their families, ethnic communities, and the Asian American community (Chan & Kiang, 2021). Expectations from family and ethnic communities typically focused on choosing a partner of the same *ethnicity* in order to maintain cultural heritage (e.g., values, language, food, traditions), transmit ethnic heritage to future generations, and facilitate relationship-building due to shared cultural values and traditions. Expectations from the broader Asian American community conveyed the importance of choosing a partner of the same *race* in order to challenge discrimination and promote Asian American racial pride. Though ethnicity and race are distinct, societal messages about dating within one's ethnic or racial group were combined in this theme and termed as "ethnic-racial," following the convention of

scholars who used this term when experiences of race and ethnicity cannot be clearly distinguished from each other (cf. Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014).

Expectations of choosing a partner of the same ethnicity were often described as being directly communicated by same-ethnic family members of participants. Participants described receiving these messages from family throughout their lives. However, these expectations were particularly apparent when participants disclosed their interracial relationship to their families. For example, a Taiwanese American woman described her family's concerns about cultural loss:

> My family supports the relationship, but I think they can see that I am losing touch with my Asian culture. I think my mom is slightly disappointed that my kids will not grow up in an Asian household and probably will not learn to speak Mandarin as my brother and I did as kids.

In addition to preserving cultural heritage, participants reported that their families preferred being able to share cultural values with the participant's partner and communicate with the participant's partner in the family's heritage language. A Korean American woman explained, "My extended family would prefer that he be Korean, because they think the culture will match better. Plus it would be easier for some of them to communicate with him, because English is their second language."

Beyond family members, expectations of promoting ethnic-racial pride through romantic relationships were perceived from other Asian Americans, including friends, acquaintances, strangers, and the broader Asian American community. An Indian American woman noted how this expectation was more prominent among older generations:

> Asian American youth are very accepting of interracial relationships… I know a lot of older immigrant Asians get upset when they hear about immigrant children

> marrying someone outside of their race because they think it means our culture is getting lost.

Notably, this quote serves as an example of the ways that participants do not clearly distinguish between race and ethnicity when discussing expectations of promoting ethnic-racial pride. While the participant described expectations about maintaining heritage culture, she used race-related terminology (e.g., Asian Americans, Asians) and directly referenced "marrying outside of race."

Other participants described cultural socialization messages specific to dating within one's *racial* group, which were sometimes perceived as judgment. A Korean/White American woman wrote, "I know that some Asian Americans look down upon other Asian Americans dating White people, because they fear that their culture is being white-washed." Like the family interactions described above, expectations of same-race dating were often communicated through interactions where participants disclosed having an interracial White partner. A multiethnic[3] Asian American woman, who endorsed having "a lot" of Asian American friends, described her friends' reactions, "At first, my friends thought that I would have been dating an Asian guy, and were thrown off that I was with a White guy." Similarly, a transracially adopted Chinese American woman did not receive messages about same-ethnic dating from her White adoptive family but perceived expectations about same-race dating from other Asian Americans:

> ...when I am talking to other Asians and bring up my partner, they generally assume that he is also Asian. They were almost shocked to learn that he was White, and after that I felt a little weird being with them. I've always felt more pushback from Asians learning I was dating a White person than I've seen White people reacting to my partner dating me, an Asian. I don't know if that comes from the stereotype of Asians dating within the cultural group or not.

[3] Specific Asian ethnicities redacted for participant confidentiality.

White Supremacy and Racism. Participants' experiences within an Asian/White interracial relationship also were shaped by cultural socialization about White supremacy and racism, that is, messages about the superiority of Whites relative to other racial groups. First, participants reported cultural socialization from Asian/Asian American family and community members that indicated a preference for White interracial partners. The promotion of beliefs about Whites' superiority was most notable when participants described their families' acceptance of or preference for White partners over other racial groups (e.g., Black, Latinx, Middle Eastern), similar to previous findings of Asian American parents communicating negative attitudes toward other racial groups (Qin et al., 2012).

Furthermore, some participants reported receiving cultural socialization from their families or ethnic communities that having a White partner was a symbol of upward assimilation in U.S. society. This view is captured by the following quote from a Chinese American woman:

> My family is very supportive of me dating a Caucasian [White] because they think that being with a White person is "better" than being with another Asian. I think it's largely because my parents are immigrants and they've experienced racism and xenophobia so me dating a White person is better for me integrating into American society. Likewise, my family in China has always viewed the Western world and foreigners with rose colored glasses, feeding into the ideals of the American dream.

Similarly, a Filipino American man wrote:

> My dad would joke around every time I had a new girlfriend saying that if they were White, it was success. I didn't really understand that back then, but now I guess socially you are given a higher status in the eyes of Asians if you have a [White] girlfriend/wife.

Several other Filipino American participants referenced a specific preference for White partners within Filipino culture. These beliefs are reflective of colonial mentality, or the

simultaneous denigration of Filipino culture and perception of White Americans as superior due to the legacy of U.S. colonization in the Philippines (David & Okazaki, 2006).

In addition, a few participants noted their families' openness to their White partners due to preferences for lighter skin in their heritage culture. This bias toward light skin is consistent with colorism, the societal preference and privileging of lighter-skinned people that is rooted in White supremacy and Western colonization (Dixon & Telles, 2017; Hunter, 2007). For example, a Vietnamese/Black American man wrote, "I would say that it helps that she's fair skinned, which is something that many Asians prefer compared to darker skin."

Second, messages about White supremacy and racism were conveyed through racialized comments and interactions with White partners or partner's family members. Some comments were directed at participants while other comments were made in participants' presence but not specifically directed toward them. These interactions commonly included subtle racism previously described in the microaggressions literature (Sue et al., 2009) such as foreigner objectification (e.g., assuming participants would have an accent, being questioned about U.S. citizenship), views of Asian Americans as model minorities, and views of Asian Americans as a monolith (e.g.., assuming that all Asian ethnicities are the same). Though participants reported experiencing such forms of subtle racism in their everyday lives, consistent with prior findings (Ong et al., 2013), an Indian American woman noted, "It feels much more personal when someone from [partner's] extended family makes these pointed remarks." Less commonly, some participants reported overtly racist comments made by their partners or partner's families,

such as using racial slurs for Asian Americans, referring to COVID-19 as the "Wuhan virus," or derogatory comments about Muslims (for an Indian American participant) or other racial minorities.

Finally, through interactions with strangers, participants received White supremacy messages that promote White racial purity by prohibiting race mixing (Cashin, 2017). There were participants who described receiving stares, "side-eye glances," "weird looks," or being "scoffed at" while in public with their partners. Participants often contextualized these interactions as coming from older Whites or in certain geographic locations (e.g., small towns, rural areas). However, they also reflected on the ambiguous nature of these interactions and feeling unsure whether to attribute strangers' reactions to race (i.e., being an interracial couple or being a visible minority in a predominantly White area) or other reasons. There were also participants who described interactions where they and their partners were not recognized as a couple, such as at restaurants (i.e., with servers) or at the movie theater. For example, an Indian American woman wrote that White females "have tried hitting on him even if I'm standing next to him."

***Racial De-emphasis*.** The third form of cultural socialization was racial de-emphasis, which construed Asian/White interracial relationships as "normal" and de-emphasized the salience of interraciality or having a White partner. First, participants received messages about partner selection that de-emphasized race and instead focused on individual characteristics and happiness. These messages are similar to egalitarian socialization messages that communicate that race and ethnicity are not important in choosing friends (Juang et al., 2016). Participants often detailed these messages as

coming from their family members. An Indian American man wrote, “My mother told me explicitly that she and my father don't mind what race or what background my partner is from, so long as they're a good person,” and a Chinese American woman described, “My family has been very open and accepting of our relationship. They are much more focused on the quality and happiness of how we are together rather than the racial component.” Other participants noted ideal partner characteristics valued by their families such as “kind,” “comes from a good family,” “smart,” and “great personality,” while reinforcing familial messages focused on happiness.

Second, participants identified aspects of their environments that normalized being in an interracial relationship with a White partner, demonstrating the role of propinquity in Asian/White relationships (Fujino, 1997). Referencing experiences of growing up in predominantly White locations and socializing with primarily White peers in neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces, participants reflected on how these experiences shaped their pool of potential romantic partners and history of previous partners to be mostly White. As a Korean American woman wrote, “Growing up in a mostly White town meant that in high school pretty much the only boys to date were White boys.” Furthermore, these experiences of propinquity led participants’ families to view interracial White partners as normal. This view is captured by the following quote from a Vietnamese/Chinese American woman:

> I have many cousins of the same age in my family and no one, including myself, had dated someone of a different ethnicity until I started dating my current boyfriend. Other than this, there was truly nothing surprising about me dating a Caucasian [White]. I am from MN which is predominantly Caucasian [White], and I grew up going to schools with many Caucasians [Whites] so this could have played a role in it being not surprising.

Likely due to assimilation, participants reported having mostly White peers and a low salience of race in their peer groups, which facilitated acceptance of participants' Asian/White relationships and de-emphasized the interracial nature of their relationships. For example, another Indian American man noted, "Most of my friends and peers have been White my whole life, so they also don't view it as exceptional." As a unique case, a multiethnic[4] Asian American man described the normalization of Asian/White relationships in the specific context of the gay community:

> I don't feel like our relationship is any different from what other people expect of us. Most of my friends are in an interacial [sic] relationship, which makes it easy to talk and relate to. Plus, White + Asian is a common combination in the gay community so I don't feel too different from what others think of us.

Additionally, some participants reported acceptance of interracial White partners in their families due to specific family characteristics or structures. These characteristics included participants having other siblings or extended family members in interracial relationships (including but not limited to White partners), having interracial Asian/White parents themselves, and growing up in a White transracial adoptive family. The acceptance of interracial White partners within family structures and White peer groups is illustrated by a transracially adopted Chinese American woman who wrote:

> I believe our relationship is viewed in a normal scope of acceptance, many of my friends and family are White and so I sometimes believe that since my partner is the same race as them it almost feels not as weird, because of a shared cultural background.

Another participant, a Chinese/White American woman, similarly described how her Multiracial family structure and propinquity both influenced her family's view of her relationship: "My parents support our relationship. Their own relationship is interracial

[4] Specific Asian ethnicities redacted for participant confidentiality.

and I think they saw myself ending up with a White boyfriend, especially since I grew up with predominately White people."

Finally, participants noted how specific values, along with other aspects of their ecological contexts, promoted views of Asian/White couples as "normal." Participants often attributed acceptance of their relationship by peers, family, and society to values such as "liberal," "progressive," "left-leaning," "tolerant," and "open-minded." In the following quote, a multiethnic[5] Asian American woman explained how values inform her family's acceptance of the relationship, while also referencing cultural socialization messages of promoting ethnic-racial pride: "Overall, my family views our relationship positively. What helps that is I come from an open-minded family who are alright with us dating outside of our race, and a couple of my family members are also in interracial relationships." Participants also noted how values of acceptance were represented in their ecological contexts, such as diverse peer groups, peer networks where interracial relationships were common, and geographic locations where interracial couples were common or widely accepted. For instance, the following quote from an Indian American woman alludes to these values in the present time period as well as location:

> I think nowadays interracial couples aren't as surprising as they would have been maybe ten years ago. Every now and then my boyfriend will get weird looks when we are out together, usually when we aren't in the city. I think it would probably be worse if we lived somewhere down south, but Minnesota is a very progressive place to live.

Overall, the racial de-emphasis theme demonstrates how participants receive messages that promote a view of Asian/White interracial relationships as normal, which may de-

[5] Specific Asian ethnicities redacted for participant confidentiality.

emphasize the salience of being in an interracial relationship. The apparent ubiquity and acceptance of Asian/White relationships is described by a Korean American woman:

> I definitely think by society we're seen as a statistic - I mean, it's a pretty common cultural reference in Asian American culture (even Ali Wong jokes about it). Even my partner and I point out all the White/Asian couples we see.

In summary, participants' responses highlighted three forms of cultural socialization that participants received through interactions with their families, partners, friends, partner's families, and broader communities. These cultural socialization messages communicated various beliefs about race, ethnicity, and culture, as well as Asian/White interracial relationships. The next section describes racial tropes of Asian/White interracial couples, which are informed by cultural socialization messages.

Racial Tropes. In addition to cultural socialization, my analyses also identified four racial tropes about Asian/White interracial relationships: fetishization of Multiracial children, racial/cultural betrayal, Asian female/White male couples, and Asian male/White female couples. Just as tropes are repeated ideas or plot points in novels and movies, racial tropes are common societal stereotypes that represent how others perceive and interact with Asian/White couples. Racial tropes differ from the cultural socialization messages described above, in that cultural socialization represents broader ideas about race, ethnicity, and culture that were contextualized to Asian/White interracial relationships within this study. In contrast, racial tropes represent more specific views of Asian/White couples and individual within these relationships. As I explain below, racial tropes are manifested from various forms of cultural socialization.

Fetishization of Multiracial Asian/White Children. First, participants referenced racial tropes that fetishize the potential Multiracial Asian/White children from

Asian/White interracial relationships. Although the fetishization of Multiracial people as "beautiful" or "exotic" exists as a broad racial trope about the Multiracial community (Skinner et al., 2020), participants' responses demonstrated how the racial trope of Multiracial children is manifested specifically with regard to Asian/White interracial relationships. Participants noted that this trope was communicated by various members of their communities, including friends, families, partner's families, social media, and both Asian and White Americans more broadly. The following quote by a Lao American woman notes the ubiquity of this trope, while also distancing herself from this view:

> I feel like an interracial Asian/White relationship is very sought after and romanticized in society. On Tiktok there is a trend called "Wasian check" and young Asian people are saying that they wish they were "Wasian" or that they hope they have babies with a White guy so they can have cute kids. I think it's odd because people shouldn't date others based on race or to have mixed kids.

Participants often interpreted this trope as a form of racism, such as a Vietnamese/Black American man who wrote:

> In regards to her friends, I remember one comment that stuck in my mind. For context, her friends are all White, and there was at some point a joke made about how if we married, they would want a "mixed" child to themselves. This struck me in a weird way, just because of this glorification of a mixed race child by them, on top of an implication that they wouldn't want to date someone Asian or of a different race.

However, other participants who understood these comments as common reactions to being in an Asian/White interracial relationship, without recognizing the racialized nature of this trope. For example, a Chinese/Vietnamese American woman wrote, "I feel like when it comes to his family and our friends, they don't really care much but occasionally squeal at the idea of cute 'wasian babies.'" In rare instances, participants themselves perpetuated the fetishization of Multiracial children, such as a Vietnamese American man who wrote, "I discuss how [partner] and I will have hybrid children to other people and

we always like to point out that half Asian half White people are usually good looking." Overall, participant responses demonstrate that the racial trope of Multiracial Asian/White children is a common heuristic for how others view Asian/White interracial relationships.

Ethnic-Racial Betrayal. The second trope of ethnic-racial betrayal refers to views that Asian Americans in interracial relationships, particularly with White partners, are "betraying" their ethnic-racial groups and cultural heritage. While informed by the Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride form of cultural socialization, the ethnic-racial betrayal trope differs as the trope assumes that choosing a White partner reflects one's devaluation of their ethnic-racial group membership and desire to identify with White American culture. The assumptions of this trope are reflected in the labels of "white-washed," "twinkies," and "race traitors" that participants received from Asian Americans and other people of color as a result of being in an Asian/White interracial relationship. Other participants reflected general perceptions of judgment for violating norms of same-ethnicity or same-race dating by having an interracial White partner.

Beyond referencing this trope, participants' responses demonstrated their efforts to distance themselves from the assumptions of the trope described above, and instead, assert their own agency in partner choice. For example, a Vietnamese/Chinese American female wrote:

> I think that some people view interracial relationships as being "traitorous" to one's culture. Even putting extremist beliefs of interracial relationships/diversity being detrimental to society aside, I've seen some people, including Asian Americans, say that people in interracial relationships are "betraying" their own. While these might be jokes, I think some of it is rooted in true beliefs. I feel as though Asians, more so than many other races, have almost an expectation of their children marrying other Asians. These beliefs can be a little disheartening to

> hear, because I don't feel as though I am turning my back on my culture, but I don't want to discredit other people's feelings. If other people would prefer to date someone who is the same race as them as a way of connecting to their race, or if they feel like it's easier to have someone who already understands a lot of traditions, then that's okay -- that's their decision. But it's when they speak for other people that I have a bigger problem.

Furthermore, participants' responses demonstrate the importance of considering how race intersects with other identities or other subgroups within the Asian American community. Though participants of multiple genders and sexual orientations reported judgment from the Asian American community for dating interracially, references to the ethnic-racial betrayal trope included the use of more extreme language (e.g., "race traitor") in responses from female participants with White male partners. The gendered nature of this trope is illustrated by the following quote from a Korean American female:

> I believe that the Asian American community tolerates if Asian American men date people of different races than Asian American women. I think that when people see me dating my boyfriend, they assume that I am a "fake" Asian or someone who is trying too hard to be accepted by the White/European American community.

Responses from participants of other groups, including transracial adoptees and Multiracial Asian Americans, additionally demonstrate how the ethnic-racial betrayal trope may be used to enforce the boundaries of membership and belonging within the Asian American community. For example, a Chinese American female reflected on simultaneous judgment for having interracial White partners and experiences of exclusion related to growing up as a transracially adopted person:

> In larger communities, I get criticism for how whitewashed I am and how I only like White guys. Being a transracial adoptee was really hard growing up because the White people weren't completely understanding and the Asian people were pretty judgmental of my lack of cultural knowledge.

Similar sentiments of judgment and exclusion are reflected in the following quote from a

Chinese/White female who self-identified as “mixed Asian American” and described her appearance as “sometimes White-passing”:

> Sometimes I feel that Asian Americans place judgements on my relationship; in that I almost feel “less Asian” because I'm not with someone that is also Asian. Again, I think this is a product of my being mixed; but I often feel that I would be treated as 'more Asian' if I was with someone that was Asian, like my brother for example. I feel that he can operate in Asian circles like more of an insider than me because of this fact.

***Asian Female/White Male Couples*.** The third racial trope of Asian female/White male couples consists of various stereotypes of the Asian American women and White men within these couples. The Asian female/White male trope is informed by cultural socialization messages of promoting ethnic-racial pride and White supremacy and racism. Referenced frequently by female participants within this relationship pairing, this trope is well-summarized by a Vietnamese American woman:

> I have told my partner that I question our relationship sometimes because there is a bit of a bad ring to White male Asian female relationships such as the White guy having “yellow fever” and fetishizing the Asian race and the female is a self hating White washed individual that wants to leech off of the White male’s privilege.

This relationship trope includes a gendered, misogynistic version of the ethnic-racial betrayal trope that specifically depicts Asian American women as betraying their ethnic-racial groups, rather than any Asian American with an interracial White partner. In addition, the Asian female/White male trope assumes that Asian American women have internalized messages of White supremacy and racism, which manifest not only in negative views of their ethnic-racial groups and Asian American men, but also in a desire for assimilation into White American culture and its encompassing social capital and privilege (e.g., U.S. citizenship, financial capital, social status). As with the overall White supremacy and racism narrative, this trope reflects how at times, the pan-Asian diaspora

internalizes and perpetuates White supremacy by encouraging Asian women to choose White American men as partners. For example, a Chinese American woman recalled being praised for dating a White man while living in Thailand, while expressing discomfort with the assumptions inherent in others' praise of her partner choice:

> Because I'm Asian, many people assume I'm Thai and see that I'm dating a White male. More often than not, they assume that he's rich and will tell me I'm lucky to get a White guy. Often times while walking through cities in Thailand, I would feel self conscious and extra aware of our identities because while some think I'm lucky, there are others who judge us assuming that I'm a Thai woman who is with a rich White American.

In addition to stereotypes of Asian American women, the Asian female/White male trope casts White men in these relationships as having "yellow fever" or "Asian fetish." That is, White men are viewed as fetishizing Asian women due to racist stereotypes of Asian women as submissive, passive, and sexualized (Espiritu, 2007; Keum, Brady, et al., 2018; Ono & Pham, 2009). Female participants often referenced the "Asian fetish" aspect of the Asian female/White male trope. Participants generally expressed discomfort and self-consciousness about how their relationship was perceived and also engaged in efforts to ensure that Asian fetish was not a part of their own relationship. These efforts included discussing Asian fetish with their partners, checking to see if their partners had a history of multiple Asian American past partners, and being on guard for possible signs or comments that their partners viewed them as a fetish. A Hmong American wrote, "I have even considered never dating a White man again because this weighs so heavily on me." In general, female participants with White male partners frequently referenced the overall Asian female/White male relationship trope in discussing their relationship experiences.

Asian Male/White Female Couples. Finally, the last racial trope about Asian male/White female interracial couples focus on the decreased frequency of such couples and the role of White supremacy on this trope. Male participants with White female partners reported perceptions and comments of Asian male/White female relationships as "rare" and "less common." Responses highlighted how this trope was informed by White supremacy, as manifested in negative stereotypes of Asian American men as less masculine and undesirable romantic partners (Liu et al., 2018; Ono & Pham, 2009; Wong et al., 2012). In the following quote, a Chinese American male reflected on the negative stereotypes of Asian American men implicit in comments about Asian male/White female couples:

> There have been a number of times people make comments how I got lucky dating a White girl which have made me [feel] isolating as well. It is a reminder that Asian men are the least desired demographic in the dating world and we often have to overcompensate for our image by being successful in other areas of our lives including financial in order to date outside of our race.

Similarly highlighting the influence of White supremacy on this racial trope, a Vietnamese/White American male reflected on the privilege that comes from being able to "pass" as non-Asian, while acknowledging his personal challenges of ethnic-racial identity development:

> I have a few friends (males) that think it's difficult for Asian men to date non-Asian women. But ultimately it's hard to describe how I feel about community perspective. I struggle with my own ethnicity and race too often where I don't know where I should stand. Personally, being "half" Vietnamese and White has been difficult, but that's to acknowledge that I think it is different than being 100%. I think I have an 'advantage' when dating as an Asian male who doesn't necessarily look Asian.

In addition, while the general experience of not being perceived as a couple was previously described above with the White supremacy narrative, there were male

participants who described such experiences specifically in reference to the Asian male/White female trope.

Furthermore, there were participants who viewed the Asian male/White female trope as resisting the very same racism and White supremacy that shaped the trope, such as a Filipino American male who wrote, "I feel that my wife and I are both proud to be a part of 'normalizing' this kind of interracial couple." As an extension of this view of "resistance," a different Filipino American male described perceptions of Asian male/White female couples among Asian Americans: "I think Asians would definitely look at our relationship and think 'good job' to me. It feels like a universal Asian thing to see an Asian man with a White woman and think that the Asian man is successful." However, the view of Asian American males as "successful" for having a White partner is problematic as it relies on assimilation as a form of "overcoming" racism, which ultimately perpetuates White supremacy. This view is also misogynistic as it objectifies White women and is used in the reverse manner to critique Asian American women with White partners.

Summary of Results. In summary, the first research question was originally intended to explore participants' personal, individual narratives of experiences within Asian/White interracial relationships. However, analyses found that across participants' individual experiences within their relationships, they received common forms of cultural socialization about race and ethnicity, which included racial tropes about interraciality and Asian/White couples. Results demonstrate that participants receive multiple, conflicting messages about race and interraciality that complicate how participants experience and make sense of being in Asian/White interracial relationships. The

complexity of navigating these multiple socialization messages is illustrated by a response from a Filipino American woman:

> By larger communities, I feel like there is definitely a different standard. In the Asian American/Filipino community, I feel like there is almost a double expectation. On one hand, I've always been told to date another nice Filipino boy. However, on the other hand, a lot of people have praised me for dating a White boy, which I feel shows a bit of post-colonial impacts on the Asian society.
>
> Also by White Americans, I've also experienced two different views. On one hand, there is the same thing as me where the expectation is to date someone of the same race OR interracial dating is simply normal. On the other hand, there is a concept of 'yellow fever' that goes around where White guys are criticized for fetishizing Asian women, even if that may not be the case.

The first research question identified cultural socialization messages about race, ethnicity, and Asian/White interracial relationships that were *communicated* to participants. Next, the results for the second research question identified specific master and alternative narratives about race, ethnicity, and culture that were *internalized* by participants within their own relationship accounts.

Research Question 2: Internalized Narratives

The second research question aimed to identify master and alternative narratives about race, ethnicity, and culture that participants internalized in their accounts of being in Asian/White interracial relationships. The internalization of master and alternative narratives represents how participants respond to and make sense of the cultural socialization about race, ethnicity, and interraciality described in the results for the first research question. Using thematic analysis and drawing from previous theory, I identified three societal narratives of addressing racial, ethnic, and cultural differences that were internalized in participants' responses. These societal narratives served as templates that

participants used to construct their own stories of navigating race, interraciality, and differences within their relationships (McLean & Syed, 2015).

The first narrative of Color-Blindness described participants' denial and minimization of race and racial differences in their interracial relationships. I classified Color-Blindness as a master narrative, as denying and minimizing differences is a dominant racial attitude in the United States (Neville et al., 2000, 2013; Park & Judd, 2005; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). The second narrative of Multiculturalism described participants' focus on ethnic and cultural differences in their interracial relationships. I classified Multiculturalism as a master narrative, as it is also a common approach for addressing diversity (Park & Judd, 2005; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). The third narrative of Racial Awareness described participants' awareness of race, racism, and racial differences in their interracial relationships. I classified Racial Awareness as an alternative narrative, as it challenges dominant systems of power by acknowledging the relevance of race in everyday life and in societal structures (Neville et al., 2013). Though these three narratives are present in broader conversations about race and diversity beyond interracial relationships, the results show how these narratives manifest within the context of Asian/White interracial relationships.

Color-Blindness. The master narrative of color-blindness (Neville et al., 2000, 2013; Park & Judd, 2005; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010) described participants' denial or minimization of race in their relationships, including racial issues and racial differences. Among interracial couples more broadly, color-blindness is a common strategy of addressing racial differences (Brummett, 2017; Inman et al., 2011; Seshadri & Knudson-Martin, 2013). Various forms of color-blindness are described below.

One form of color-blindness was the blatant denial of race or racial differences (Neville et al., 2000), using phrases such as "I don't see my partner as White," "I don't think of it as an 'interracial romantic relationship,' just a romantic relationship," or "I don't view it any differently than a same-race relationship." Other participants minimized or downplayed race, expressing views that conveyed a discomfort with race or racial issues such as wanting to "not make a big deal out of being an interracial couple," "not focus on race too much," or "not be too sensitive" (Neville et al., 2000). Participants also de-emphasized racial categories (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010), as illustrated by a quote from a Chinese/Malaysian American woman: "We're just two human beings who hit it off." In addition, participants conveyed that race was not salient in the relationship, either directly ("Race doesn't really affect the relationship") or indirectly through little to no mention of race in their responses. That is, participants were directed to answer separate questions about the roles of race and ethnic culture in their relationship, along with definitions of each construct. Responses with limited to no mention of race, as defined as a social construct, implied that race, racial differences, and interraciality were unimportant to how participants viewed their relationships.

Participants described trivial ways of engaging with race with their partners, noting that race-related discussions were limited to racial jokes or phenotypic differences (e.g., hair color, skin tone). For instance, an Indonesian American woman cited DNA testing to minimize race: "We are all of different mixed raced [sic]. Even for [partner], when we did an ancestry test, we found out that he is part Norwegian, Swedish, German, etc. So really, what is he then? American or European?" Another participant, an Indian

American male, minimized race by critiquing racial classification systems based on phenotype:

> I've always thought that race is a ridiculous concept, especially to the extent that it's fixated on in the United States. Simply by defining race as a grouping of physical characteristics, the United States contradicts itself by grouping all Asians and Asian Americans under one label; I can tell you firsthand that I look significantly different from my peers from other parts of India, let alone South Korea or Malaysia. You could read journals of travelers along the silk road talking about Persians with blonde hair if you really wanted to; according to the delineation of race in the US those people would've been Asian too. Race hasn't really ever come up in my relationship other than in discussions discussing phenotypes, like the difference in our eye color or hair texture.

Participants drew on assimilation to minimize racial differences or the relevance of race in their relationships. In denying racial differences, participants referenced their assimilation into American culture or strong identification with White American culture (Neville et al., 2000; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). For instance, a Vietnamese American man wrote: "There are no ethnic culture differences. I was born American. I am still American and this means that I understand American values but have a little bit of insight on what is happening at certain Asian restaurants." Some participants shared that their ability to assimilate with White Americans facilitated acceptance and positive interactions with their White partner's families. For instance, a Taiwanese American female recalled trying to "be more White" to cope with feeling out of place at her White partner's family event as the only Asian person. Later on, this participant noted that her ability to "speak perfect English and act pretty White" likely led her partner's extended family members to approve of her.

Finally, participants used color-blindness to cope with racialized incidents and experiences within their relationship, including with their partner, partner's family, and

others. That is, in response to some of the racialized incidents described above in the White Supremacy and Racism theme, participants downplayed race or minimized these incidents. For example, a Korean American woman described using assimilation to minimize differences after her partner assumed her ethnicity was Chinese:

> When I told him that I was Korean and not Chinese, he laughed and said that it was "basically the same thing." His comment made me feel like he did not really care about my culture and values. After not being very responsive for a few days, my boyfriend apologized for assuming and making a generalization about me and I accepted his apology, however I am still a bit hesitant talking about being Korean. I mainly try to act as "American" as possible when I am around him to prevent future fights.

Other participants downplayed similar incidents where their partner's families assumed they were Chinese. A multiethnic Asian American man minimized the systemic racism inherent in this assumption: "I think it's funny and stupid because of how and where his mom grew up. She didn't mean to offend me, it's just that people don't know." A Vietnamese American woman shared that her feelings were affected because her partner's family continued to assume she was Chinese after several years of dating, but also minimized the role of race, stating, "But they aren't racist, I just think that they forget."

There were participants who downplayed racial incidents and brushed off racial comments in order to avoid discomfort for others, or even themselves. For example, an Indian/White American woman wrote:

> My fiance's dad will make negative comments about "towel heads" and I don't think he realizes that I am half Indian and my dad is Sikh and that whole side of my family wears turbans. It bothers me when comments like this are made, but I am more uncomfortable worrying that whoever made the comment is going to realize that they insulted my ethnicity and will feel bad.

Similarly, a Filipino American woman discussed visiting her partner's majority-White, rural hometown and receiving "looks" from strangers:

> This made me feel very uncomfortable, I felt like I did not belong even though his family was beyond welcoming of me. I guess I was just nervous that by going out with his family in [partner's hometown] I would somewhat bring a bad image of them from the people living in their town. Even though I know that it is ridiculous for people to think of others as lower just because of race, but I honestly felt that way when I was there.

This participant's response reflects that in response to discomfort from being one of few people of color in her partner's hometown, she felt embarrassed about her race, rather than recognizing the systemic racism that shaped this incident. Another participant, a Chinese/Vietnamese woman, reflected on the discomfort of "sticking out" when with her partner's White family while simultaneously minimizing her discomfort:

> … whenever we would go out to eat/go on a trip with his family I wonder what others think when they see a White family of 4 and an Asian-American. We played this off more as a joke, but it is nothing that bothers our relationship but moreso of what I wonder personally… I have not really addressed how I feel about this, but it is definitely weird. I would not want others to think that I am the adopted sister or international exchange student with this White family because I simply am not either of those things. I don't let this bother me therefore it does not bother my relationship or partner.

Multiculturalism. The master narrative of multiculturalism (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010) describes participants' focus on ethnic and cultural differences in acknowledging differences and discussing their experiences within an Asian/White interracial relationship. That is, participants viewed interracial relationships as a process of navigating ethnic and cultural differences, including values, customs, traditions, religion, food, and language (Inman et al., 2011). Participants' responses demonstrate that navigating ethnic and cultural differences within interracial relationships involves positive experiences of learning and growth as well as challenges. The following quote

from a Korean American man exemplifies the acknowledgement of difference among participants internalizing the multiculturalism narrative:

> It's much tougher than being in a same-race relationship. There are many more points of communication that need to be spoken or potential expectations with the family that need to be bent or broken. This requires a higher commitment and resolve than with a same-race relationship that can be trying at times.

In terms of positive experiences, participants described their interracial relationships as opportunities to learn from each other and grow from ethnic/cultural differences. This perspective is similar to parenting practices and diversity interventions that focus on overcoming differences by appreciating different perspectives and learning about other ethnic and racial groups (Juang et al., 2016; Park & Judd, 2005; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). Participants frequently reported instances of cultural sharing, such as introducing their partners to food from participants' heritage culture, teaching heritage language to partners, and teaching about holidays and cultural traditions (e.g., Lunar New Year). At times, participants even noted conversations with partners about plans for transmitting participants' heritage culture to future children, reflecting ethnic socialization intentions for Multiracial children (Hughes et al., 2006; Wu et al., 2020).

For some participants, sharing heritage culture with White partners represented internalization of socialization messages about promoting ethnic-racial pride. That is, in lieu of having a same-ethnicity partner, participants still valued maintaining heritage culture and their partner's willingness to engage in cultural traditions. Other participants noted that their families did not have same-ethnicity dating expectations but their families expected that any partner would be willing to accept participants' cultural heritage. For example, a Vietnamese American man recalled a conversation with his partner:

> I explained to her that my family is very accepting even if she is not Vietnamese. The most important thing for us to be accepting and willing to adapt to the culture. We understand she is not Vietnamese, but she will need to eat our food, and respect our culture.

For some participants, teaching White partners about heritage culture was a strategy to increase family approval when families had strong expectations of cultural preservation via same-ethnicity, such as a Vietnanese/Chinese American man who wrote, "My girlfriend's willingness to try pork liver congee/rice porridge impressed my mom."

Participants expressed positive affect in describing experiences of cultural sharing, such as a Hmong American woman who wrote: "It has been great. Because we come from different backgrounds, we are able to learn so much more about different cultures. It truly is a learning experience." A Chinese American male similarly described the opportunities for growth and learning in his relationship: "We've used it to teach one another something new, show them new experiences, and try things we otherwise would not have exposure to, or the knowledge to try ourselves, like new cuisine or different traditions (holiday, events, etc)." Participants also highlighted traits such as open-mindedness, curiosity, and empathy as valuable for effectively navigating and learning from ethnic and cultural differences, as a Vietnamese American woman wrote: "It really requires both sides to be open-minded in the relationship to work out. I feel that if my partner wasn't open-minded it would be hard for him to accept things within my cultural values."

In contrast to positive experiences, participants also described relationship challenges stemming from ethnic and cultural differences (Inman et al., 2011). Some of these challenges occurred between participants and their partners, such as barriers to

cultural sharing (e.g., difficulty introducing ethnic food to partners, partners' disinterest in learning about participants' heritage culture) and misunderstandings and conflicts from differences in cultural values (e.g., sense of obligation to family). Other challenges arose during interactions with participants' families, including language barriers and differences in family norms. Some participants reflected on their strong awareness of dating interracially due differences in cultural norms between their parents and White partner's families. For instance, a Filipino American woman wrote:

> My boyfriend also had to deal with the strictness of my parents during the first year of our relationship, which is not even a problem with his parents or other White parents I've met before. That always made me feel awkward because I just hoped he understood that a lot of Asian parents had that kind of attitude about their daughter dating. It's a big difference I think, in terms, of cultural upbringing. I have never been ashamed of my parents though because I love them so much.

Similarly, an Indian American woman reflected on familial and cultural differences in how partners interact with each other's families:

> Something that has been different for my partner to adjust to is that while I have met his family multiple times, he has never met my parents in person… I have tried to explain that even if he meets our family, we would have dinner together once and that would be it - we don't really do big family events where we invite non family people to come. He has trouble with this because with his family, I am more or less one of them and they always offer to take me out to dinner with them and to let me stay with them.

Participants were particularly aware of ethnic/cultural differences in the relationship when navigating family disapproval due to family expectations of a same-ethnicity partner (i.e., cultural socialization messages of Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride described above). A few participants noted that their parents did not take their interracial relationship seriously and continued to encourage them to find a partner of the same ethnicity, even going as far to set them up on dates with other people despite participants being in a serious, committed relationship. In anticipation of familial disapproval of

dating outside the ethnic group, some participants selectively disclosed the relationship to family members, delayed or avoided telling their families about their partner, or delayed introducing their partners to their families.

Finally, there were participants who described internal conflict and fears of cultural loss due to dating a White partner. The internal conflict expressed by participants reflects the internalization of cultural socialization messages about promoting ethnic-racial pride through same-ethnicity or same-race dating. For example, a Korean American woman reflected on receiving familial socialization about cultural preservation:

> My entire family is Korean and growing up, my parents emphasized the importance of creating a Korean-value household for my own children. My mom and dad have also occasionally told my sister and I to marry a Korean man because it makes raising children easier since they already understand. So, when I began dating my boyfriend, I felt like I was going against what my parents expected.

In another case, a Vietnamese American woman described feelings of conflict related to dating a White, Catholic partner after being raised by "very traditional and Buddhist" parents and having grown up expecting herself to marry a partner of the same race and religion:

> Right now I really love him, but sometimes it is hard when I go back to my values that were with me my whole life. I ask myself if it is worth it or am I making a mistake. But I believe I know who I am and is [not] going to change just because of a boy. I know I will stay Buddhist and he respects that. We respect each other's differences and that is important. However knowing to have that relationship with my parents are [sic] going to be hard because of that language barrier and even telling [them].

In summary, the multiculturalism narrative described participants' view of being in an Asian/White interracial relationship as focused on ethnic and cultural differences. Participants recognized their relationships differed from same-race relationships due to

ethnic and cultural differences, which manifested as opportunities for growth and cultural sharing as well as navigating challenges related to these differences.

Racial Awareness. The alternative narrative of racial awareness describes participants' recognition of race, racism, and racial differences in discussing their experiences within an Asian/White interracial relationship. This narrative demonstrates how participants are not only aware of the White supremacy and racism socialization messages described previously, but also how they choose to contend with these messages as part of being in an interracial relationship. My discussion of the racial awareness narrative is informed by the conceptualization of critical consciousness, that is, people's consciousness of systemic oppression and their actions to address inequalities (Friere, 2018). Critical consciousness consists of *reflection* on oppressive societal structures and *action* to address structural injustice and inequality (Diemer et al., 2016; Friere, 2018). However, the racial awareness theme was distinct from conceptualizations of critical consciousness, as participants generally acknowledged an individual-level understanding of race and racism in their relationship but less frequently connected racial experiences to systemic racism (Diemer et al., 2016).

In terms of reflection, participants described anticipation and awareness of racism in their relationships, both experienced individually and as a couple. As participants reflected on initially preparing to meet their partner's families, some expressed concerns about experiencing racism or being accepted as an ethnic-racial minority. For example, an Indian/White American man wrote, "Her parents were pretty typical right-leaning Republicans of Wisconsin and I was unsure about how they would react to their daughter dating me. However, they were very nice when I met them and made me feel at home."

Other participants perceived that their partner's families would want a White partner for their child, such as a Chinese/White American woman who wrote, "I know his dad is also fine with our relationship but on the inside I feel like if he was dating a White girl his dad would approve more." Participants' awareness of racism included racialized incidents with partners, partners' families, and strangers, which were previously described in the White supremacy and racism theme. Participants also recognized that their White partners may not fully understand participants' racialized experiences as people of color, as a Hmong American woman explained:

> My views on race in our relationship is that we both are very different people as a result of it and how it's molded our interaction with a White-predominant society in suburban Minnesota. I feel that there are things he'll never understand and I will never understand because of these differences.

Participants also highlighted the role of White supremacy socialization in shaping ideas of physical attractiveness, which contributed to feeling inadequate in their relationship with a White partner. For instance, a Korean American man described the impact of White standards of physical attractiveness:

> When growing up, you learn a lot about the stereotypes Westerners have against Asians and has definitely brought onto me a [sic] insecurity in the way I view myself physically. Sometimes I get insecure about myself when being intimate with my girlfriend. I remember one time lying in bed and asking her of what she thought of my eyes. Asians have the stereotype of having small eyes and I have always known that my eyes were smaller than my peers. I asked if they were small and she looked at me with a look of astonishment as she then told me how much she loved my eyes and that they were so expressive and beautiful.

Similarly, a Vietnamese American woman reflected on feeling inadequate for not fitting her partner's type, though later noted that this feeling did not play a large role in her relationship:

> He is the first White boyfriend I have introduced to the family and I am the first Asian girl he's dated. Only speaking from my side, I have felt insecure that I wasn't his type since he has dated White, blonde girls before me.

Finally, participants reflected on the role of race and racism in shaping the racial tropes previously described in Research Question 1. Referencing the racial trope of Asian female/White male couples, female participants with White male partners expressed concerns about how their partner choice may have been shaped by racism. For instance, a Vietnamese/Chinese American woman wrote:

> In the past, I've had some internal struggles with myself about being an Asian woman in a relationship with a White, male partner. I remember hearing that it's really common to be in that specific type of interracial relationship, and how some of it might be tied up in societal norms of viewing White men as "best" and other men as "lesser," and I've worried that these views have influenced my decisions.

Another participant, a Filipino American woman, expressed internal conflict about potentially perpetuating White supremacy despite having strong ethnic-racial pride:

> Because of this stereotype, sometimes I feel bad that I as an Asian woman (of Filipino heritage too) decided to be in a committed relationship with a White man. Am I letting down my fellow Filipinas or Asian women by not modeling the possibility of loving people of our ethnicity or culture or skin? Am I doing a disservice to Asian men by debunking the stereotype that Asian men are not attractive or sexy?

Relatedly, some participants cited awareness of systemic racial oppression as contributing to concerns of dating a White partner, as a multiethnic Asian American woman explained:

> I used to be against dating White people, for historical reasons such as yellow fever, the fetishization of Asian womxn, how poorly they were treated throughout history by foreigners, all the children left behind in Vietnam whose fathers were Westerners, colorism, trends in Asia that value western features for beauty, stereotypes about Asian womxn dating White men for superficial reasons or to make them feel superior to others (as in some culture, like Cambodia, being with a foreigner is considered "upping" your social status). Even though I am happily dating my current partner, these are all still things that pervade my mind.

In terms of action, participants described engaging in conversations with their partners about race, racism, and interraciality. These conversations included racialized incidents that occurred within the relationship (e.g., experiences of racism from partner's family or as a couple), participants' experiences of racism outside of the relationship, and discussions of Asian fetish, as noted previously in the description of racial tropes. Given that data collection partly occurred at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, some participants noted discussions of anti-Asian racism related to the pandemic. For example, a Korean American woman expressed gratitude for her partner's support in the face of anti-Asian racism:

> My current partner never jokes about my race, or anyone's for that matter, and is extremely aware of daily racism and micro-aggressions I sometimes have to face. My example of this is that I work in a pharmacy, and I have had patients treat me differently than other pharmacy employees because I am Asian (in the COVID-19) crisis and when I complain and have a conversation with my partner about this, he doesn't tell me that I'm overreacting or that they aren't valid concerns, he simply listens and offers potential solutions on how I can educate the patients, avoid the situation, or confront it.

For some participants, it was important to discuss race and acknowledge interraciality early in the relationship. A Chinese American woman recounted her first date with her partner:

> … within that first couple of hours with her we started addressing family dynamics and how her family might react to her having a non-White partner. It was important to me from the start to establish an open dialogue about our differences.

An Indian American woman shared a similar story of intentionally addressing the impact of White supremacy and imperialism on interraciality:

> Early in the relationship it felt weird because he's part German and WWII was a thing. India was colonized by British, so with that history of our races moving forward and not thinking about the implication was tough. We had that conversation early on.

In addition, some participants noted that they valued racial awareness as an important characteristic when choosing a partner or having a successful relationship. A Hmong American woman explained, "I want someone I commit to to be aware of these racial issues without the defensiveness that often comes with White privilege." Similarly, a Korean American woman wrote:

> I think it works because my partner is aware of her whiteness. She might not be well-versed in race or the history of whiteness like I am, but her initiative to learn and to recognize these things has been very good for us.

Through conversations about race, racism, and interraciality, some participants noted that their partners grew in awareness of racism and White privilege (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011). As a Chinese American woman explained: "He has also told me that because of our relationship, he has learned to spot and call out racism in an effective manner and use his White privilege." Another Chinese American woman recounted, "He's started noticing more micro-aggressions and/or racial injustices towards Asians (e.g. why White actors keep getting cast in canonically Asian roles), and I feel extremely fortunate to have him as an ally."

Research Question 3: Extent of Narrative Internalization

The goal of this quantitative research question was to determine the extent to which Asian Americans internalize master and alternative narratives in their personal narratives about being in Asian/White interracial relationships. The master and alternative narratives of Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness described in Research Question 2 were coded for internalization on a 4-point scale, where 1 represented no internalization, 2 represented weak internalization, 3 represented moderate internalization, and 4 represented strong internalization.

The Multiculturalism narrative had the highest mean rating for internalization (M = 2.6, SD = 0.9). In terms of rating frequency, 12% of participants were rated as None, 26% were Weak, 46% were Moderate, and 16% were Strong (see Figure 2). Intraclass correlations ranged from .77 - .82.

The Color-Blindness narrative had the next highest mean rating for internalization (M = 2.3, SD = 1.0). In terms of rating frequency, 30% of participants were rated as None, 20% were Weak, 39% were Moderate, and 11% were Strong (see Figure 2). Intraclass correlations ranged from .77 - .84.

The Racial Awareness narrative had the lowest mean rating for internalization (M = 2.2, SD = 0.9). In terms of rating frequency, 29% of participants were rated as None, 34% were Weak, 30% were Moderate, and 7% were Strong (see Figure 2). Intraclass correlations were .80 for both raters.

Internalization of Color-Blindness was significantly, negatively correlated with internalization of Multiculturalism (r = -.26, p < .001) and Racial Awareness (r = -.72, p < .001). Internalization of Multiculturalism was significantly, positively correlated with internalization of Racial Awareness (r = .22, p = .003).

Tables 2 – 8 contain crosstabs of narrative internalization ratings between narratives as well as with various demographic characteristics. Although formal analyses (e.g., mean comparisons) were not conducted, the tables are included to provide further description of participants rated at various levels of narrative internalization.

Figure 2

Overall Frequency (%) of Narrative Internalization Ratings

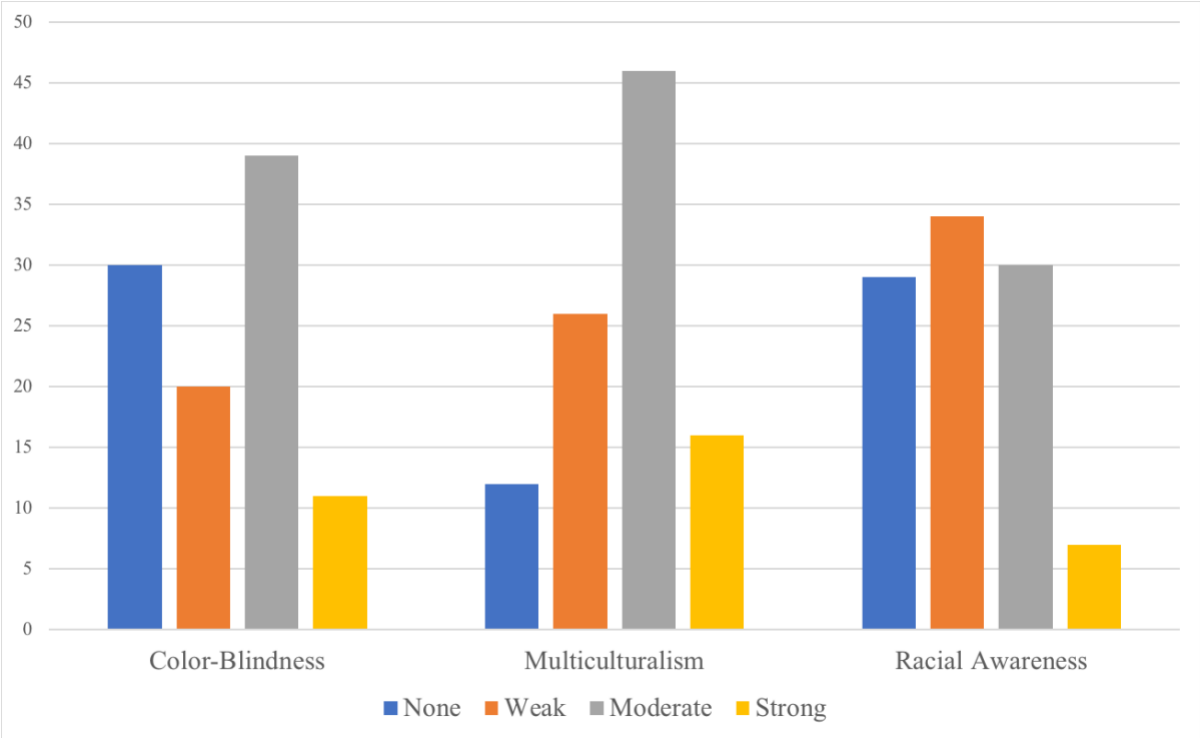

Table 2

Crosstabs of Frequency (%) of Narrative Internalization Ratings Between Narratives

Narrative		Color-Blindness			
		None	Weak	Moderate	Strong
Multiculturalism	None	26	17	35	22
	Weak	20	16	41	22
	Moderate	28	20	46	7
	Strong	53	27	20	0
Racial Awareness	None	2	9	56	33
	Weak	16	20	58	6
	Moderate	55	34	11	0
	Strong	100	0	0	0
		Multiculturalism			
		None	Weak	Moderate	Strong
Racial Awareness	None	11	42	40	7
	Weak	17	22	47	14
	Moderate	9	20	46	25
	Strong	7	7	64	21

Table 3

Frequency (%) of Narrative Internalization Rating by Gender

Gender		Color-Blindness	Multiculturalism	Racial Awareness
Cisgender Male	None	22	13	26
	Weak	20	43	50
	Moderate	41	30	20
	Strong	17	13	4
Cisgender Female	None	32	12	30
	Weak	19	20	29
	Moderate	39	51	32
	Strong	10	17	8

Note. Participants who identified as gender non-conforming/non-binary/agender/genderqueer were excluded from table due to low cell count preventing aggregate data reporting.

Table 4

Frequency (%) of Narrative Internalization Rating Among Multiracial Asian Americans and Transracial Adoptees

Group		Color-Blindness	Multiculturalism	Racial Awareness
Multiracial[a]	None	19	31	35
	Weak	31	46	42
	Moderate	35	15	15
	Strong	15	8	8
Transracial Adoptee	None	31	50	19
	Weak	19	19	38
	Moderate	38	25	38
	Strong	13	6	6

[a] Participants who indicated their race as Asian American and another racial group.

Table 5

Frequency (%) of Narrative Internalization Rating by Nativity

Nativity Status		Color-Blindness	Multiculturalism	Racial Awareness
U.S.-Born	None	31	9	31
	Weak	19	25	33
	Moderate	38	51	27
	Strong	12	16	9
Foreign-Born[a]	None	22	7	26
	Weak	22	37	37
	Moderate	44	33	37
	Strong	11	22	0

[a] Excludes foreign-born participants who indicated they were transracially adopted.

Table 6

Frequency (%) of Narrative Internalization Rating by Generation Status Among U.S.-Born Participants

Generation Status		Color-Blindness	Multiculturalism	Racial Awareness
2nd Generation	None	32	5	32
	Weak	16	23	32
	Moderate	40	55	26
	Strong	12	17	9
2.5 Generation	None	27	32	18
	Weak	36	27	36
	Moderate	32	27	36
	Strong	5	14	9

Note. 2nd Generation is defined as participants who indicated that both parents were foreign-born. 2.5 Generation is defined as participants who indicated having one U.S.-born and one foreign-born parent. U.S.-born participants who described their generation status outside of 2nd or 2.5 generation were excluded from table due to low cell count preventing aggregate data reporting.

Table 7

Frequency (%) of Narrative Internalization Rating by Number of Previous White Partners

Previous White Partners		Color-Blindness	Multiculturalism	Racial Awareness
None	None	32	10	30
	Weak	17	21	32
	Moderate	38	51	32
	Strong	13	18	6
One or more	None	28	14	29
	Weak	21	29	35
	Moderate	40	43	28
	Strong	11	14	8

Table 8

Narrative Internalization Rating by Relationship Length (Years) and Participant Age

		Color-Blindness		Multiculturalism		Racial Awareness	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Relationship Length	None	2.4	1.6	2.3	1.5	1.9	1.4
	Weak	2.1	1.5	2.1	1.5	1.9	1.3
	Moderate	1.9	1.4	2.0	1.4	2.5	1.6
	Strong	1.9	1.1	2.1	1.6	1.9	1.4
Age[a]	None	23.2	4.2	21.4	2.3	21.6	3.1
	Weak	23.4	4.0	22.6	3.8	23.0	4.1
	Moderate	22.2	3.5	23.0	4.0	23.2	4.1
	Strong	21.7	3.1	22.8	4.0	23.4	3.2

[a] n = 178 due to some participants who did not report age.

Table 9

Correlations, Means, SDs, and Reliabilities

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Color-blindness Narrative	-										
2. Multiculturalism Narrative	-.26**	-									
3. Racial Awareness Narrative	-.72**	.22**	-								
4. Racial Color-blindness	.35**	-.16*	-.40**	-							
5. Appropriated Racial Oppression	.20**	-.18*	-.20**	.33**	-						
6. IM-4 Achievement Orientation	.26**	.05	-.32**	.35**	.22**	-					
7. IM-4 Unrestricted Mobility	.12	.01	-.05	.03	.14*	.05	-				
8. Relationship Quality	-.07	.07	.04	-.15*	-.20**	-.07	-.05	-			
9. Psychological Distress	-.10	-.09	.07	-.18*	.24**	-.10	.05	-.08	-		
10. Social Belongingness	.13	.08	-.17*	.11	-.36**	.18*	.05	.15*	-.46**	-	
11. Ethnic-Racial Identity Affirmation	-.10	.17*	-.01	-.11	-.68**	.05	-.08	.30**	-.34**	.47**	-
Mean	2.33	2.66	2.15	2.23	2.84	4.40	3.73	6.34	2.12	5.50	3.46
SD	1.02	0.89	0.93	0.63	0.90	1.22	1.34	0.69	0.72	1.04	0.55
α	-	-	-	.87	.90	.92	.87	.86	.82	.91	.87

Note. $N = 189$.

$^{*}p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$.

Research Question 4: Internalization and Psychological Outcomes

Pearson correlations and descriptive statistics for all study variables are reported in Table 9. All analyses were conducted twice, once with the full sample and once excluding participants who incorrectly responded to attentive responding items below a certain threshold. Unless otherwise indicated, all results remained the same for both samples.

Correlations. First, as a validity check of narrative internalization coding, Pearson correlations were calculated between narrative internalization scores and measures of racial colorblindness, appropriated racial oppression, and model minority myth internalization.

The Color-Blindness narrative was significantly, positively correlated with racial colorblindness ($r = .35$, $p < .001$), appropriated racial oppression ($r = .20$, $p = .005$), and the Achievement Orientation subscale of the IM-4 ($r = .26$, $p < .001$). The correlation between the Color-Blindness narrative and Unrestricted Mobility subscale of the IM-4 was not significant ($r = .12$, $p = .09$).

The Multiculturalism narrative was significantly, negatively correlated with racial colorblindness ($r = -.16$, $p = .03$) and appropriated racial oppression ($r = -.18$, $p = .01$). However, in the subsample that excluded inattentive responders, the correlation between Multiculturalism and racial colorblindness was no longer significant ($r = -.14$, $p = .06$). The Multiculturalism narrative was not significantly correlated with the Achievement Orientation or Unrestricted Mobility subscales of the IM-4 ($r = .05$, $p = .49$; $r = .01$, $p = .87$, respectively).

Finally, the Racial Awareness narrative was significantly, negatively correlated with racial colorblindness (r = -.40, p < .001), appropriated racial oppression (r = -.20, p = .01), and the Achievement Orientation subscale of the IM-4 (r = -.32, p < .001). The Racial Awareness narrative was not significantly correlated with the Unrestricted Mobility subscale of the IM-4 (r = -.05, p = .50).

Regressions. Second, multiple linear regressions were conducted to determine the main effects of the three master and alternative narratives on each of the four outcome variables of relationship quality, psychological distress, social belonging, and ethnic-racial identity affect. The unstandardized and standardized coefficients, standard errors, and significance values are reported in Table 10.

Relationship Quality. The overall linear regression model was not significant, $F(3, 185) = .45$, $p = .72$. The main effects of the Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness narratives on relationship quality were not significant.

Psychological Distress. The overall linear regression model was not significant, $F(3, 185) = 1.56$, $p = .20$. The main effects of the Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness narratives on psychological distress were not significant.

Social Belonging. The overall linear regression model was significant, $F(3, 185) = 2.83$, $p = .04$, $R^2 = .04$. However, the main effects of the Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness narratives on social belonging were not significant.

Ethnic-Racial Identity Affect. The overall linear regression model was significant, $F(3, 185) = 2.84$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .04$. There was a significant main effect of the Multiculturalism narrative on ethnic-racial identity affect ($B = .10$, $SE = .05$, $p < .05$).

However, the main effects of the Color-Blindness and Racial Awareness narratives on ethnic-racial identity affect were not significant. In addition, follow-up analyses with the subsample excluding inattentive responders found that the overall linear regression model was not significant, $F(3, 182) = 2.34$, $p = .08$, and the main effect of the Multiculturalism narrative was not significant ($B = .09$, $SE = .05$, $p = .06$).

Table 10

Outcome Variables Regressed on Internalization Scores of Master and Alternative Narratives

	Relationship Quality				Psychological Distress				Social Belonging				Ethnic-Racial Identity Affect			
Variable	*B*	*SE*	β	*p*	*B*	*SE*	β	*p*	*B*	*SE*	β	*p*	*B*	*SE*	β	*p*
Full Sample																
Constant	6.38	0.36	–	<.001	2.62	0.37	–	<.001	5.47	0.53	–	<.001	3.63	0.28	–	
CB	-0.05	0.07	-0.07	0.51	-0.09	0.07	-0.14	0.20	0.03	0.11	0.03	0.77	-0.10	0.06	-0.18	0.09
MC	0.04	0.06	0.05	0.49	-0.10	0.06	-0.12	0.10	0.14	0.09	0.12	0.10	0.10	0.05	0.16	0.04
RA	-0.02	0.08	-0.02	0.84	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.98	-0.20	0.12	-0.18	0.09	-0.10	0.06	-0.17	0.11
Subsample																
Constant	6.36	0.36	–	<.001	2.62	0.37	–	<.001	5.57	0.53	–	<.001	3.65	0.28	–	<.001
CB	-0.04	0.07	-0.06	0.61	-0.10	0.08	-0.14	0.20	0.03	0.11	0.03	0.77	-0.08	0.06	-0.16	0.14
MC	0.03	0.06	0.04	0.61	-0.10	0.06	-0.13	0.09	0.14	0.09	0.12	0.12	0.09	0.05	0.14	0.06
RA	-0.01	0.08	-0.01	0.93	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.99	-0.22	0.12	-0.20	0.06	-0.10	0.06	-0.18	0.09

Note. Full sample $N = 189$. Subsample $n = 186$. CB = Color-Blindness. MC = Multiculturalism. RA = Racial Awareness.

Discussion

This dissertation study had four goals: 1) describe Asian Americans' experiences within Asian/White interracial relationships; 2) identify master and alternative narratives about navigating race that were internalized within participants' accounts of Asian/White interracial relationships; 3) determine the extent to which participants internalized master and alternative narratives; and 4) explore whether internalization of master and alternative narratives was associated with relationship quality, psychological distress, social belonging, and ethnic-racial identity.

The first research question originally intended to provide a detailed, descriptive account of participants' personal narratives about Asian/White interracial relationships, including interactions with participants' families and others (e.g., partner, partner's family) and experiences of navigating racial differences in the relationship. The analyses for this question were intended to be inductive (i.e., data-driven) in identifying themes that described the dataset. However, during analysis, I found that the use of a theoretically informed inductive approach (Syed & Nelson, 2015) would help organize the data and themes in a more theoretically meaningful manner. Thus, I interpreted my results for the first research question through the lens of cultural socialization. While cultural socialization is most frequently studied as a family process (Hughes et al., 2006), in this study cultural socialization was understood more broadly as a process by which beliefs about race, ethnicity, and culture are communicated and transmitted.

I identified three themes representing forms of cultural socialization that participants received pertaining Asian/White interracial relationships: Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride, White Supremacy and Racism, and Racial De-Emphasis. While the cultural

socialization messages identified in this study are consistent with forms of cultural socialization that exist broadly in research on Asian Americans (Choi et al., 2017; David & Okazaki, 2006; Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2016), this study demonstrates how cultural socialization is communicated with respect to Asian/White interracial relationships. First, Promoting Ethnic-Racial Pride described familial and ethnic-racial community expectations of finding a partner of the same ethnicity or race in order to maintain and transmit heritage culture to future generations and challenge anti-Asian racism. As such, Asian/White relationships were viewed as violating these norms and expectations. Second, White Supremacy and Racism described beliefs about the cultural and intellectual superiority of Whites. Generally, beliefs communicated by participants' families and ethnic-racial communities promoted positive views of White partners, whereas beliefs communicated through interactions with partners, partners' families, and strangers reinforced views of Asian/White relationships as different or stigmatized and perpetuated discrimination toward Asian Americans. Third, Racial De-Emphasis described societal messages that de-emphasized race and conveyed views of Asian/White relationships as "normal" within society. In addition, my analyses for the first research question identified four racial tropes of Fetishization of Multiracial Children, Racial/Cultural Betrayal, Asian Female/White Male Couples, and Asian Male/White Female Couples. These tropes are informed by the three broader forms of cultural socialization and function as common heuristics for how Asian/White interracial couples are perceived by others.

The goal of the second research question was to identify master and alternative narratives about navigating race that were internalized within participants' responses. I

identified a total of three narratives: Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness. I classified Color-Blindness and Multiculturalism as master narratives and Racial Awareness an alternative narrative. These three narratives represented participants' various approaches for addressing racial, as well as ethnic and cultural, differences. Participants minimized racial differences (Color-Blindness), focused on ethnic and cultural differences (Multiculturalism), or focused on racial differences (Racial Awareness) to various extents in describing their relationships. These master and alternative narratives are partially consistent with a previous study of Indian American/White couples, which found that more participants viewed their relationship as "intercultural" whereas fewer participants viewed their relationship as "interracial" (Inman et al., 2011).

The third research question sought to determine the degree to which participants internalized each of the three master or alternative narratives of Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness. My analyses found that internalization of the Multiculturalism narrative was strongest, followed by Color-Blindness and Racial Awareness. As Multiculturalism and Color-Blindness were both identified as master narratives, this finding is generally consistent with my theoretical expectation that internalization would be stronger for master narratives than alternative narratives. However, the stronger internalization of Multiculturalism relative to Color-Blindness was not consistent with my theoretical expectation, given that Multiculturalism has been conceptualized as an alternative perspective to Color-Blindness (Neville et al., 2013; Park & Judd, 2005; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). One explanation for the relatively stronger internalization of Multiculturalism within my sample is that the majority of participants

came from immigrant families. Of the U.S.-born participants, most (83%) indicated that both their parents were foreign-born, while another 15% had one foreign-born parent. In addition, a small proportion of the sample (14%) had immigrated to the United States during their childhood (excluding transracial adoptees). Thus, nearly all of the sample had at least one immigrant parent, if not both, and some participants themselves were immigrants. Given the more recent history of immigration in participants' families (for those who were not transracially adopted), ethnic and cultural differences in interracial relationships may have been salient for many participants. In addition, the salience of ethnic and cultural differences, compared to Color-Blindness or Racial Awareness narratives, may be due to the tendency for Asian American families to engage in more socialization around ethnicity and culture rather than race (Juang et al., 2017). Overall, this finding suggests that Asian Americans acknowledge differences in Asian/White interracial relationships, rather than denying differences, but they emphasize ethnic and cultural differences more strongly than they emphasize racial differences.

The fourth and final research question aimed to provide evidence for the validity of identified master and alternative narratives, as well as explore associations between internalization of narratives and indicators of psychological and relationship adjustment. First, correlations between identified master and alternative narratives and related constructs were consistent with theoretical expectations. As hypothesized, participants who strongly internalized the Color-Blindness narrative in describing their relationship also had stronger attitudes about general racial color-blindness, stronger appropriated racial oppression, and stronger internalization of the model minority myth.

I did not have hypotheses about the Multiculturalism and Racial Awareness narratives and the constructs used for validity checks of narratives, due to the fact that I identified these narratives from the data using qualitative analyses. The associations between these two narratives and the validity constructs are somewhat consistent with prior theory. Strong internalization of the Multiculturalism narrative was associated with weaker racial color-blindness beliefs in the full sample, but this correlation was no longer significant with the subsample of participants (n = 186) that excluded inattentive responders (n = 3) and thus was not interpreted as a robust finding. Strong internalization of the Multiculturalism narrative was associated with weaker appropriated racial oppression beliefs, which appears theoretically consistent as those who hold ethnicity to be an important part of their identity may feel positively about it, rather than appropriating beliefs that disparage their ethnic background (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014).

Strong internalization of the Racial Awareness narrative was associated with weaker racial color-blindness beliefs, weaker appropriated racial oppression, and weaker internalization of the model minority myth. These correlations are consistent with the idea that "color consciousness," or consciousness about race, is an alternative perspective to racial color-blindness (Neville et al., 2013). Overall, the correlations between master and alternative narratives and related constructs provide support for the validity of the quantitative coding of the Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and Racial Awareness narratives identified through qualitative analyses.

The more substantive multiple linear regression analyses of the fourth and final research question were exploratory in nature. The overall regression models examining the main effects of internalized narratives (i.e., Color-Blindness, Multiculturalism, and

Racial Awareness) were not significant for relationship quality and psychological distress, and the main effects of internalized narratives were also not significant for those same outcomes. While the overall model of social belonging regressed on internalized narratives was significant, the individual main effects of internalized narratives were not significant. The overall model of ethnic-racial identity affect regressed on internalized narratives was significant, and there was a significant main effect of the Multiculturalism narrative on ethnic-racial identity affect. However, this finding was no longer significant in follow-up analyses using a smaller subsample (n = 186) that excluded inattentive responders, leading me to conclude that this finding was not robust. Overall, the results of the regression analyses suggested that internalized narratives do not contribute significantly to variance in relationship quality, psychological distress, social belonging, or ethnic-racial identity affect.

A possible explanation for the null findings of the regression analyses is the limited precision of the theory guiding the choice of these psychological and relationship outcomes. These outcomes were chosen as part of an initial, exploratory investigation of how internalized master and alternative narratives relate to general relationship and psychological well-being, as there was limited theory about Asian/White interracial relationships to guide the choice of these constructs. However, it is likely that there are other factors that contribute more significantly to variance in these broad constructs. It is also possible that internalized narratives may have an indirect effect on these constructs, though the mechanisms by which this effect occurs have not yet been articulated. In addition, it is possible that dyadic processes (i.e., between partners) related to narrative internalization may contribute more directly to psychological and relationship outcomes.

Similarly, it is possible that internalized master and alternative narratives of addressing racial and ethnic differences may be associated with outcomes more specific to interracial relationships or more directly related to narrative content. For example, as noted in the introduction, many Asian/White interracial couples go on to have Multiracial Asian/White children. Thus, intentions for discussing race and racialized experiences with future Multiracial children may be a relevant outcome of internalized master and alternative narratives (Wu et al., 2020). In addition, as participants often described racialized interactions with White partners or partners' family members, participants' sense of self-efficacy and empowerment in responding to interpersonal experience of racism may also be a relevant outcome of internalized narratives (Suyemoto et al., in press).

The study results advance the limited research and theory on Asian/White interracial couples in several ways. In terms of methodological contributions, this study used a large, ethnically diverse sample of Asian Americans to create a descriptive account of the specific phenomena of navigating race and racial differences within Asian/White interracial relationships, which builds upon previous studies limited to specific ethnicities (Inman et al., 2011; Iwasaki et al., 2016) or Asian female/White male heterosexual couples (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011). The inclusion of multiple Asian ethnicities as well as individuals who identified as sexual minorities, individuals who identified with more than one racial group, and transracially adopted individuals represents the AsianCrit tenet of strategic (anti)essentialism (Museus, 2013), demonstrating that there are a multitude of Asian American experiences within

Asian/White interracial relationships and documenting experiences that are typically excluded from discussions and studies of Asian/White couples.

In terms of theoretical contributions, the complementary mixed-methods study design and structural-psychological approach (Syed & McLean, 2020) of the master narrative framework (McLean & Syed, 2015) enabled me to inductively identify the structural context of race and racism that informed Asian American participants' racial experiences in Asian/White interracial relationships, then examine the process of how Asian Americans contend with societal messages about race via internalization of master and alternative narrative. Furthermore, the design and theoretical approach enabled the quantitative exploration of the associations between qualitatively derived narrative processes (i.e., internalization of master and alternative narratives) and relationship and psychological outcomes.

Limitations and Future Directions

While this study centered Asian American perspectives in investigating Asian/White interracial relationships, the analyses and findings were limited by the exclusion of partner perspectives, thus failing to capture the dyadic process by which negotiating race occurs within relationships. As alluded to above, the psychological and relationship outcomes in the fourth research question may be more sensitive to dyadic, interactive effects, instead of individual narrative internalization. For example, the extent of partner match/mismatch in narrative internalization may contribute significantly to relationship quality, whereas individual narrative internalization does not. Future studies should use dyadic designs to understand how each individual partner views race and how partners negotiate race together. Measures of relationship variables that contribute to

relationship quality, such conflict and perceived partner responsiveness, also should be included, and these variables can be coded using any qualitative data collected from participants.

In addition, the use of dyadic designs allows for investigation of how individuals influence their partner's racial attitudes in a bidirectional process. For example, this study found that some Asian American participants engaged in conversations with White partners that increased partners' awareness of racism, but it is unclear how White partners may influence Asian Americans' internalization of master or alternative narratives. The examination of dyadic processes may help identify strategies for effectively and constructively negotiating racial differences.

A second major limitation of the study is the generalizability of results due to several factors. First, cisgender women were overrepresented in the sample, with three-quarters of participants identifying as cisgender women. The overrepresentation of cisgender women is consistent with general psychology research, prior studies of Asian/White relationships (AhnAllen & Suyemoto, 2011; Inman et al., 2011; Iwasaki et al., 2017), and demographic trends in interracial marriage among Asian Americans (Livingston & Brown, 2017). Nonetheless, the overrepresentation of female participants may have biased the findings of qualitative analyses (i.e., cultural socialization messages, racial tropes, master and alternative narratives) to be more representative of the experiences of Asian American cisgender women than Asian Americans overall in Asian/White interracial relationships. For example, the racial trope of ethnic-racial betrayal appeared to have a gendered component and at times, overlapped with references to the trope of Asian female/White male couples. Given this overlap, it is possible that

the ethnic-racial betrayal trope was more salient in this data due to the overrepresentation of women in this sample. There were also more references to the Asian female/White male trope compared to the Asian male/White female trope, likely due to the smaller proportion of Asian American men in the sample. Given the intersections between race and gender in participants' interracial relationship experiences, future studies that aim to broadly describe Asian/White relationships should oversample Asian American men and gender minorities.

A second factor impacting generalizability was the social class of the sample. As participants were primarily recruited from a university, the majority of participants were either undergraduate students or had at least a college-level education. The high education levels of the sample may have contributed to the ways that participants perceived cultural socialization messages and internalized master and alternative narratives. For example, those who have attained a high level of education may be more likely to believe that systemic barriers and inequities do not exist. Alternatively, as some participants indicated learning about systemic racism through college coursework, highly educated participants may have been more likely to internalize Racial Awareness narratives.

A third factor potentially impacting generalizability was the demographics of the coding team. As four of the five team members identified as cisgender women, this may have introduced bias in interpreting written qualitative data, such as being more attuned and sensitive to data from female participants. Although the identities represented within coding teams may be limited by availability of research personnel, future studies can

promote fidelity to the data (Levitt et al., 2017) by implementing procedures such as participant checks (Morrow, 2005) and the use of auditors (Hill et al., 1997).

Another limitation is that the analyses and coding system did not fully capture the intersectionality of participants' experiences, despite including Asian Americans of different ethnicities and intersecting identities (e.g., transracial adoptees, sexual minorities, Multiracial Asian Americans). The focus on navigating race in identifying master and alternative narratives and coding for internalization did not fully account for the experiences of participants who were navigating multiple forms of oppression (e.g.., racism, heterosexism, monoracism). For example, some participants in same-sex relationships indicated that racial differences were less salient compared to navigating the process of coming out to their families. Some transracially adopted participants described racial and ethnic differences related to the experience of adoption, such as learning more about their birth culture or visiting their birth country (A. Y. Kim et al., 2020). Future studies that focus specifically on the interracial relationship experiences of Asian American subgroups, including using subsets of data from the current sample, may more adequately address the AsianCrit tenets of strategic (anti)essentialism and intersectionality.

Finally, though the use of written data in my study design allowed me to collect data from a larger sample and have a wider range of perspectives represented, there were limitations to collecting written data. Notably, the way that written question prompts were phrased may have limited the answers that participants wrote, thus creating bias in the themes identified in the qualitative analysis. In particular, as several of the written prompts asked participants to write about specific incidents, the data may provide a

narrower scope of participants' relationship experiences compared to potential data collected through other formats (e.g., interviews). Furthermore, some participants provided short or vague responses that were difficult to interpret when quantitatively coding data for internalization. To improve data quality while maintaining the ability to collect larger samples using written data collection, future studies may incorporate a step of sending participants their written responses to ask for further clarification. Such a practice is similar to existing practices of conducting participant checks (Morrow, 2005). Depending on study goals and research questions, future studies may also consider using interviews for narrative data collection, as this format allows both interviews and participants to ask follow-up questions for clarification (Adler et al., 2017).

Conclusion

Asian/White couples are the second most common interracial pairing in the United States (Livingston & Brown, 2017) and the most common among Asian Americans in interracial marriages (Qian et al., 2001; Qian & Lichter, 2007). Despite these broad demographic patterns and the sociohistorical context of White supremacy and racism in which Asian/White relationships exist, there has been limited prior investigation of how Asian Americans conceptualize and negotiate race within these relationships. This was the first study that aimed to identify master narratives of race among Asian Americans with White romantic partners. Using a large, ethnically diverse Asian American sample, the current study applied a structural-psychological approach to identify the societal narratives of race that inform Asian Americans' personal narratives of race and racial differences in their interracial relationships/with White interracial partners. Participants reported receiving cultural socialization messages that either

emphasized or de-emphasized the role of race, ethnicity, and culture in their relationships. They also reported receiving messages about racial tropes of Asian/White couples, or specific stereotypes of such couples. In turn, these cultural socialization messages and racial tropes informed the master and alternative narratives of race, ethnicity, and culture that participants internalized in their own personal narratives of their relationships.

Overall, the qualitative analyses demonstrate how individuals in interracial romantic relationships are impacted by race, and more broadly, how individual differences are shaped by societal structures. While this study did not find that internalization of master or alternative narratives was directly associated with individual psychological adjustment or relationship quality, an important direction for future research is to investigate how dyadic, interactive processes of narrative internalization relate to relationship outcomes. In addition, given the fast-growing population of Multiracial children stemming from Asian/White couples (Livingston, 2017), it will also be important to examine how narrative internalization informs race-related parenting practices in Multiracial families.

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Appendix A

Consent Form

INFORMATION SHEET FOR RESEARCH
Romantic Relationships Among Young Adults

You are invited to be in a research study of romantic relationships among young adults. You were selected as a possible participant because 1) you are Asian American, 2) you were born in the U.S. or immigrated to the U.S. at or before age 10, 3) you are between 18 – 35 years of age, 4) you are currently in a committed romantic relationship (e.g., dating, married), 5) your current romantic partner is White, and 6) the length of the current relationship is between 6 months and 5 years. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Dr. Richard Lee, Professor, Department of Psychology, & Christine Wu, Graduate Student, Department of Psychology.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

- Complete a computer-based survey lasting about 1 hour, where you will answer questions about your attitudes and beliefs and write about your experiences within your relationship

Confidentiality:

Your participation in this study is confidential. Any information that directly identifies you or links to your identity will be removed from data prior to analysis and then stored separately from de-identified data used for analysis. In addition, information that directly identifies you or links to your identity will be destroyed within five years of the study. We intend to publicly publish individual-level de-identified data and the study findings. The purpose of publicly publishing de-identified data is to allow other scientists to verify the accuracy of research findings and conduct other research studies using the data. Thus, data collected from this study could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without your additional informed consent. Any personal information that could identify you will be removed or changed before de-identified data and study findings are publicly published. Individual responses will only be shared in ways that will not identify you.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. If you decide

to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Compensation:
If you agree to take part in this research study, you will be compensated with either (1) 3 REP points or (2) a $25 Amazon eGift card.

If you choose to receive gift card compensation, you will receive the $25 after completing the entire survey, and after researchers have verified that your responses are valid and appropriate. If you choose to withdraw from the study before completing the survey, you will not receive any gift card compensation. If you complete the study but your responses are not valid, you will not receive any gift card compensation.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher(s) conducting this study is (are): Dr. Richard Lee and Christine Wu. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact them using the information provided below:

Investigator Name: Richard Lee Investigator Departmental Affiliation: Psychology Phone Number: 612-625-6357 Email Address: richlee@umn.edu	Student Investigator Name: Christine Wu Email Address: wuxx1347@umn.edu

This research has been reviewed and approved by an IRB within the Human Research Protections Program (HRPP). Study number: STUDY00006916. To share feedback privately with the HRPP about your research experience, call the Research Participants' Advocate Line at 612-625-1650 or go to https://research.umn.edu/units/hrpp/research-participants/questions-concerns. You are encouraged to contact the HRPP if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.
- You have questions about your rights as a research participant.
- You want to get information or provide input about this research.

Additional information for students attending North Hennepin Community College:

This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB for North Hennepin Community College (IRB #: 200228_Matchinsky). If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you

are encouraged to contact the North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) Institutional Review Board (IRB) Chair, Daniel de Moraes at ddemoraes@nhcc.edu or by phone at 763-488-0222. You may also contact the NHCC Director of Research and Institutional Effectiveness, Dena Colemer at dcolemer@nhcc.edu or by phone at 763-424-0853.

Although no negative effects of participating in this study is anticipated, if you feel the need to talk about your participation; you can see a counselor free of charge to NHCC students. Phone: 763-493-0554, or email: counseling@nhcc.edu.

Please email the researchers if you would like a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

o I agree
o I do not agree.

Appendix B

Narrative Prompts

1. Pathway Prompt:

Please tell the story of your current romantic relationship.

Take your time and be as detailed as possible, making sure to address the points below:

- How, where, and when did you meet your partner?
- What initially attracted you to your partner?

- Have you told your ***family*** about this romantic relationship?
- If **yes**, when and how did you tell your family, and how did they react?
- If **no**, why not?

- Have you told your ***friends*** about this romantic relationship?
- If **yes**, when and how did you tell your friends, and how did they react?
- If **no**, why not?

- How would you describe your relationship right now?

2. Deviation Prompt:
Often aspects of romantic relationships are **different from what is expected or considered acceptable** by others (family, friends, culture, society, etc.).

Have you ever felt that your romantic relationship was different from what was expected by others? This could be a specific event, something more general about your relationship, or anything in between.

Please tell the story of this experience of difference in the space provided below. Take your time and be as detailed as possible, making sure to address the points below:

- In what way is the story of your relationship different from what was expected by others, or surprising to others?
- Describe ***who you have in mind*** when you think about "others"
- How has this experience of difference made you feel?

- Have you talked to ***your partner*** about this experience of difference?
    - If yes, how did you talk to your partner, and how did the conversation(s) go?
    - If no, why not?
- Have you talked to ***anyone else*** about this experience of difference?

- If yes, how did you talk to other people, and how did the conversation(s) go?
- If no, why not?

3. Role Prompt (Race):

In everyday conversations, the terms "race," "ethnicity," and "culture" are often used interchangeably. However, we would like to clarify how we are using these terms in this study. Feel free to review these definitions as you respond to the question below.

Race refers to the categories by which individuals are grouped based on physical characteristics (e.g., skin color, hair type). Examples of racial categories include: Asian/Asian American, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/American Indian, and White/European.

Ethnic culture refers to belonging to a social group with a shared national or tribal heritage. Examples of ethnic groups include: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodian, Lao, Filipino, Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.

Sometimes **race, racial issues, or racial differences** can come up in romantic relationships.

Please tell a story about how race, racial issues, or racial differences have come up in your romantic relationship.

This could be a specific event, something ongoing in your relationship, or anything in between. Take your time and be as detailed as possible, making sure to address the points below:

- When, where, and how do **race, racial issues, or racial differences** come up? (For example, if writing about a specific event, what happened, when in the relationship did this event occur, where you were, and who was with you?)
- What are ***your thoughts and feelings*** about this story of ***race*** in your relationship?
- How do your thoughts and feelings about this story affect your relationship or how you view your relationship?

- Have you discussed this story with ***your partner***?
  - If yes, when and how did you discuss this story with your partner? What were your partner's reactions, thoughts, and feelings?
  - If no, why not?
- Have you discussed this story with ***anyone else***?
  - If yes, when and how did you discuss this story with other people?

4. Role Prompt (Ethnic Culture):

In everyday conversations, the terms "race," "ethnicity," and "culture" are often used interchangeably. However, we would like to clarify how we are using these terms in this study. Feel free to review these definitions as you respond to the question below.

Race refers to the categories by which individuals are grouped based on physical characteristics (e.g., skin color, hair type). Examples of racial categories include: Asian/Asian American, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/American Indian, and White/European.

Ethnic culture refers to belonging to a social group with a shared national or tribal heritage. Examples of ethnic groups include: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Hmong, Cambodian, Lao, Filipino, Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.

In addition to race, sometimes differences related to **ethnic culture** can come up in romantic relationships.

Please tell a story about how issues or differences related to ethnic culture have come up in your romantic relationship.

This could be a specific event, something ongoing in your relationship, or anything in between. Take your time and be as detailed as possible, making sure to address the points below:

- When, where, and how do **ethnic culture, issues, or differences** come up? (For example, if writing about a specific event, what happened, when in the relationship did this event occur, where you were, and who was with you?)
- What are **your thoughts and feelings** about this story of ***ethnic culture*** in your relationship?
- How do your thoughts and feelings about this story affect your relationship or how you view your relationship?

- Have you discussed this story with ***your partner***?
    - If yes, when and how did you discuss this story with your partner? What were your partner's reactions, thoughts, and feelings?
    - If no, why not?
- Have you discussed this story with ***anyone else***?
    - If yes, when and how did you discuss this story with other people?

5. Society Prompt:
As an Asian/White couple, how is your interracial romantic relationship viewed by your family, friends, and partner's family?

- How do you feel about the way your relationship is viewed by these people?

As an Asian/White couple, how is your interracial romantic relationship viewed by ***larger communities, including Asian Americans, White/European Americans, and other segments of society***?

- How do you feel about the way your relationship is viewed by these larger communities?

6. Additional Open-Ended Prompt:

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience of being in an interracial
romantic relationship with a White partner?

Appendix C

Measures

Data Quality Question:
We care about the quality of our survey data and hope to receive the most accurate measures of your opinions, so it is important to us that you thoughtfully provide your best answer to each question in the survey.

Do you commit to providing your thoughtful and honest answers to the questions in this survey?

1. I will provide my best answers
2. I will not provide my best answers
3. I can't promise either way

Screener Questions:

Are you currently in a committed romantic relationship (e.g., dating, engaged, married) with one partner?

1. Yes
2. No

Do you have any children (e.g., biological, adopted, foster, stepchildren) whom you are currently raising?

1. Yes
2. No

Perceived Relationship Quality Components Inventory (PRQC; Fletcher et al., 2000)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

_____

not at all extremely

1. How satisfied are you with your relationship?
2. How committed are you to your relationship?
3. How intimate is your relationship?
4. How much do you trust your partner?
5. How passionate is your relationship?
6. How much do you love your partner?

Kessler-6 (K6; Kessler et al.,2003)

The following questions ask about how you have been feeling during the **past 30 days**. For each question, please circle the number that best describes how often you had this feeling.

Rating: 5-point scale (All of the time – most of the time – some of the time – a little of the time – none of the time)

During the **past 30 days**, about how often did you feel…

1. Nervous?
2. Hopeless
3. Restless or fidgety
4. So depressed that nothing could cheer you up
5. That everything was an effort
6. Worthless

General Belongingness Scale (GBS; Malone et al., 2012)

1 "Strongly Disagree"	2 "Disagree"	3 "Somewhat Disagree"	4 "Neither Agree or Disagree"	5 "Somewhat Agree"	6 "Agree"	7 "Strongly Agree"

1 When I am with other people, I feel included
2 I have close bonds with family and friends
3 I feel like an outsider
4 I feel as if people do not care about me
5 I feel accepted by others
6 Because I do not belong, I feel distant during the holiday season
7 I feel isolated from the rest of the world
8 I have a sense of belonging
9 When I am with other people, I feel like a stranger
10 I have a place at the table with others
11 I feel connected with others
12 Friends and family do not involve me in their plans

Scoring:
Acceptance/Inclusion: 1,2,5,8,10,11
(Lack of) Rejection/Exclusion (items are reverse-scored) :3,4,6,7,9,12

Appropriated Racial Oppression Scale (AROS; Campón & Carter, 2015)

Rating: 7-point (1 = Strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

1. There have been times when I have been embarrassed to be a member of my race.

2. I wish I could have more respect for my racial group.
3. I feel critical about my racial group.
4. Sometimes I have a negative feeling about being a member of my race.
5. In general, I am ashamed of members of my racial group because of the way they act.
6. When interacting with other members of my race, I often feel like I don't fit in.
7. I don't really identify with my racial group's values and beliefs.
8. I find persons with lighter skin-tones to be more attractive.
9. I would like for my children to have light skin.
10. I find people who have straight and narrow noses to be more attractive.
11. I prefer my children not to have broad noses.
12. I wish my nose were narrower.
13. Because of my race, I feel useless at times.
14. I wish I were not a member of my race.
15. Whenever I think a lot about being a member of my racial group, I feel depressed.
16. Whites are better at a lot of things than people of my race.
17. People of my race don't have much to be proud of.
18. It is a compliment to be told "You don't act like a member of your race."
19. When I look in the mirror, sometimes I do not feel good about what I see because of my race.
20. I feel that being a member of my racial group is a shortcoming.
21. People of my race shouldn't be so sensitive about race/racial matters.
22. People take racial jokes too seriously.
23. Although discrimination in America is real, it is definitely overplayed by some members of my race.

Scoring:

1. Emotional Responses: 1-7
2. American standard of beauty: 8-12
3. Devaluation of own group: 13-20
4. Patterns of thinking: 21-24

Internalized Racism in Asian Americans Scale (IRAAS; Choi et al., 2017)

Rating: 6-point (1 = Strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree)
Directions: When you see the term Asian, please feel free to consider whoever comes to mind for you, including the full range of Asian and Asian Americans in the United States.

Appearance Bias subscale

1. Many Asians would be more physically attractive if they had surgery to look more White.
2. Asians tend to all look the same to me.
3. Asians are less physically attractive than Whites.
4. Lighter skin is generally more attractive than darker skin.

Ethnic Identity Scale - Brief (EIS-B; Douglass & Umaña-Taylor, 2015)

1. I am satisfied with my racial/ethnic group membership(s).
2. I like my racial/ethnic background.
3. I feel positively about my racial/ethnic background.
4. I dislike my racial/ethnic background.
5. I feel negatively about my racial/ethnic background.
6. I wish I were of a different racial/ethnic background.
7. I have attended events that have helped me learn more about my racial/ethnic background.
8. I have read books/magazines/newspapers or other materials that have taught me about my racial/ethnic background.
9. I have participated in activities that have taught me about my racial/ethnic background.
10. I am clear about what my racial/ethnic background means to me.
11. I know what my racial/ethnic background means to me.
12. I have a clear sense of what my racial/ethnic background means to me.

Affirmation +: 1-3
Affirmation -: 4-6 (reverse-scored)
Exploration: 7-9
Resolution: 10-12

Internalization of the Model Minority Myth Measure (IM-4; Yoo et al., 2010)

Scale: 7-point (1 = Strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)

In comparison to other racial minorities (e.g., African American, Hispanics, Native Americans)...

1. Asian Americans have stronger work ethics.
2. Asian Americans are harder workers.
3. Despite experiences with racism, Asian Americans are more likely to achieve academic and economic success.
4. Asian Americans are more motivated to be successful.
5. Asian Americans generally have higher grade point averages in school because academic success is more important.
6. Asian Americans get better grades in school because they study harder.
7. Asian Americans generally perform better on standardized exams (i.e., SAT) because of their values in academic achievement.
8. Asian Americans make more money because they work harder.
9. Asian Americans are more likely to be good at math and science.
10. Asian Americans are more likely to persist through tough situations.
11. Asian Americans are less likely to face barriers at work.
12. Asian Americans are less likely to encounter racial prejudice and discrimination.

13. Asian Americans are less likely to experience racism in the United States.
14. Asian Americans are more likely to be treated as equals to European Americans.
15. It is easier for Asian Americans to climb the corporate ladder.

Scoring:

1. Achievement orientation: 1-10
2. Unrestricted mobility: 11-15

Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS; Neville et al., 2000)

1. (Reverse-scored) White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.
2. (Reverse-scored) Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.
3. (Reverse-scored) Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.
4. (Reverse-scored) Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of health care or day care) that people receive in the U.S.
5. (Reverse-scored) Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as white people in the U.S.
6. Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.
7. (Reverse-scored) White people are more to blame for racial discrimination than racial and ethnic minorities.
8. Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against white people.
9. White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color of their skin.
10. English should be the only official language in the U.S.
11. (Reverse-scored) Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.
12. Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.
13. It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.
14. Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and values of the U.S.
15. Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.
16. Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.
17. (Reverse-scored) Racism is a major problem in the U.S.
18. (Reverse-scored) It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.
19. (Reverse-scored) It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.

20. Racism may have been a problem in the past, it is not an important problem today.

Subscales:

1. Racial Privilege: 1-7 (7 items)
2. Institutional Discrimination: 8-14 (7 items)
3. Blatant Racial Issues: 15-20 (6 items)

Demographics

1. Age: _____

2. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
    a. Less than high school degree
    b. High school degree or GED
    c. Some college but no degree
    d. Associate's degree (or other 2-year degree)
    e. Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, BS, etc.)
    f. Master's degree (e.g., MA, MS, MEd, MSW, MBA, etc.)
    g. Professional and/or doctoral degree (e.g., PhD, MD, DDS, PharmD, DVM, LLB, JD, PsyD, etc.)

3. Are you currently a student (e.g., undergraduate, graduate, professional, etc.)?

    1. Yes
    2. No

3. (If A is selected for #2): What is your current student status?
    1. Undergraduate student
    2. Graduate student
    3. Professional student
    4. Not listed, please specify: _____

4. What is your year in school? (If A is selected for #3)
    1. 1st year undergraduate
    2. 2nd year undergraduate
    3. 3rd year undergraduate
    4. 4th year undergraduate
    5. 5th year undergraduate
    6. Not listed, please specify: _____

5. Gender
    1. Cisgender man (assigned male at birth and identify as a man)
    2. Cisgender woman (assigned female at birth and identify as a woman)
    3. Transgender man

4. Transgender woman
5. Gender non-conforming/non-binary/agender/genderqueer
6. Questioning
7. Not listed, please specify: _____

6. Do you consider yourself to be:
    1. Heterosexual or straight
    2. Gay or lesbian
    3. Bisexual
    4. Fluid
    5. Pansexual
    6. Queer
    7. Demisexual
    8. Asexual
    9. Prefer not to answer
    10. Not listed, please specify: _____

7. Race - Please check all that apply:
    1. African American/Black
    2. Asian American/Asian (including Indian, Filipino)
    3. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    4. European/White
    5. Latinx/Hispanic (including, but not limited to, Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican)
    6. Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native
    7. Middle Eastern/North African
    8. Not listed, please specify: _____

8. Ethnic groups are social groups with a shared national or tribal heritage (e.g., Chinese, Hmong, Korean, Vietnamese, Lao). What is your ethnic background? Please list all of your ethnic heritages.

9. Please check all racial categories that apply to your **biological mother's** racial heritage:
    1. African American/Black
    2. Asian American/Asian (including Indian, Filipino)
    3. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    4. European/White
    5. Latina(o)/Hispanic
    6. Native American/American Indian
    7. Arab/Middle Eastern American
    8. I don't know
    9. Not listed, please specify: _____

10. Please check all racial categories that apply to your **biological father's** racial

heritage:

1. African American/Black
2. Asian American/Asian (including Indian, Filipino)
3. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
4. European/White
5. Latina(o)/Hispanic
6. Native American/American Indian
7. Arab/Middle Eastern American
8. I don't know
9. Not listed, please specify: _____

11. Considering your own income and the income from any other people who help you, how would you describe your overall current personal financial situation?
    1. I live comfortably
    2. Meet needs with a little left
    3. Just meet basic expenses
    4. Don't meet basic expenses

12. Think about your family when you were growing up, from birth to age 16. Would you say your family during that time was…
    1. Pretty well off financially
    2. About average
    3. Poor
    4. It varied

13. Were you born in the US?
    1. Yes
    2. No
        i. If No: How old were you when you moved to the US?
    3. Prefer not to say

14. Which statement best describes you?
    1. I was born in the US, and both parents were born in another country
    2. I was born in the US, one parent was born in the US, and the other parent was born in another country
    3. I was born in the US, both parents were born in the US, and all grandparents were born in another country
    4. I was born in the US, both parents and all grandparents were born in the US
    5. Not listed, please specify: _____

15. Were you adopted?
    1. Yes

2. No

16. Were you adopted transracially (i.e., is at least one of your adoptive parents a different race than you)?
    1. Yes
    2. No

17. Please indicate your relationship to your first adoptive parent.
    1. Adoptive mother
    2. Adoptive father

18. Please check all racial categories that apply to your **[piped text: first adoptive parent's]** racial heritage:
    1. African American/Black
    2. Asian American/Asian (including Indian, Filipino)
    3. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    4. European/White
    5. Latina(o)/Hispanic
    6. Native American/American Indian
    7. Arab/Middle Eastern American
    8. I don't know
    9. Not listed, please specify: _____

19. Please indicate your relationship to your second adoptive parent.
    1. Adoptive mother
    2. Adoptive father

20. Please check all racial categories that apply to your **[piped text: second adoptive parent's]** racial heritage:
    1. African American/Black
    2. Asian American/Asian (including Indian, Filipino)
    3. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    4. European/White
    5. Latina(o)/Hispanic
    6. Native American/American Indian
    7. Arab/Middle Eastern American
    8. I don't know
    9. Not listed, please specify: _____

21. What is your current relationship status? (if response is A or B, skip to end of survey)
    1. Single (i.e., not currently dating or in a relationship)
    2. Casually dating
    3. In an open relationship

4. In a committed relationship with one partner
5. In a committed relationship with multiple partners
6. Engaged
7. Married
8. Not listed, please specify: _____

22. What is the length of your current romantic relationship? (If currently married, please include the time that you were dating and married to your current partner).

23. What is your **romantic partner's race**? Please check all that apply:
    a. African American/Black
    b. Asian American/Asian (including Indian, Filipino)
    c. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    d. European/White
    e. Hispanic/Latina(o)
    f. Native American/American Indian
    g. Arab/Middle Eastern American
    h. I don't know
    i. Not listed, please specify: _____

24. Have you previously been in an interracial romantic relationship?
    1. Yes (If yes, go to #25)
    2. No

25. Below, please indicate the number of your previous White partners.

26. How many of your close friends are members of the following racial groups?

	None	A few	Some	A lot
African American/Black				
Asian American/Asian (including Indian, Filipino)				
Latinx/Hispanic				
Middle Eastern/North African				
Native American/American Indian/Alaska Native				
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander				
White/European				

Multiracial				

27. How did you hear about this research study? Please check all that apply.
    1. Participant pool (e.g., REP, SONA)
    2. Community organization
    3. Flyer
    4. Social media
    5. Friend
    6. Not listed, please specify: _____

Appendix D

Coding System for Internalization of Master and Alternative Narratives

Narrative	**1 - None**	**2 - Weak**	**3 - Moderate**	**4 - Strong**
GENERAL	No mention of this narrative applying to this relationship at all	This narrative has **weak salience** in how the participant views, navigates, or defines the relationship, but far from the most important or defining factor Limited mentions (e.g., 1-2 examples), vague reference or example, limited discussion, limited personal reflection on how the narrative impacts relationship	This narrative has **moderate salience** how the participant views, navigates, or defines the relationship but not the most important (i.e., acknowledge other narratives/views), or not the most defining factor Mentioned across multiple responses or examples, or fairly developed response if only 1-2 examples are mentioned, some personal reflection on how the narrative impacts the relationship	This narrative has **strong salience** and plays an integral role in how the participant views, navigates, or defines their relationship Mentioned across multiple responses or examples, or well-developed response if only 1-2 examples are mentioned, personal reflection shows that narrative has a strong impact on the relationship
Colorblindness -	Acknowledge race, racial differences, interraciality - **WITHOUT** minimization	The minimization of race, interraciality, and racial differences has **weak/limited** salience in the responses. Race, interraciality, and ethnic/cultural differences, if acknowledged, are minimized, dismissed, or trivialized, as evidenced by **limited mention**	The minimization of race, interraciality, and racial differences has **moderate** salience in the responses. Race, interraciality, and ethnic/cultural differences, if acknowledged, are minimized, dismissed, or trivialized, as evidenced by **repeated or**	The minimization of race, interraciality, and racial differences has **strong** salience in the responses. Race, interraciality, and ethnic/cultural differences, if acknowledged, are minimized, dismissed, trivialized, or **blatantly denied**, as evidenced

		(e.g., one or few examples, vague responses, responses not developed) of **one or more** of the following: • Directly stating that race, differences, and/or interraciality are minor or relatively unimportant to relationship (e.g., state that they do not think about it often) • Reference race/ethnicity in superficial ways (e.g., joking about it, talking about race in terms of phenotypic differences) • Emphasize similarities over differences • Mention that they do not think about race a lot • Downplay race/racialized incidents that occur in the relationship (e.g., state that it's not important to discuss with partner or address with others) • Limited or no mention of race	**fairly developed mention** (e.g., across multiple responses or examples, or fairly developed response if only 1-2 examples are mentioned) of **one or more** of the following: • Directly stating that race, differences, and/or interraciality are minor or relatively unimportant to relationship (e.g., state that they do not think about it often) • Reference race/ethnicity in superficial ways (e.g., joking about it, talking about race in terms of phenotypic differences) • Emphasize similarities over differences • Mention that they do not think about race a lot • Downplay race/racialized incidents that occur in the relationship (e.g., state that it's not important to discuss with partner or address with others)	by **repeated** (e.g., across multiple responses or examples)**, well-developed, and/or strong mention** of **one or more** of the following: • **Blatant and persistent denial or minimization of racial, ethnic, and cultural differences** • Directly stating that race, differences, and/or interraciality are minor or unimportant to relationship (e.g., state that they do not think about it often) • Reference race/ethnicity in superficial ways (e.g., joking about it, talking about race in terms of phenotypic differences) • Emphasize similarities over differences • Mention that they do not think about race a lot • Downplay race/racialized incidents that occur in the relationship (e.g., state that it's not important to

		(implicitly/indirectly stating that race, differences, and/or interraciality is minor or relatively unimportant) --- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Denial or minimization of differences • Examples of how race/ethnicity is not relevant • Mention of assimilation • Mention of identification with American (or White American culture) • Positive affect about minimizing differences • Statements that race does not matter in the relationship	• Limited or no mention of race (implicitly/indirectly stating that race, differences, and/or interraciality is minor or relatively unimportant) --- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Denial or minimization of differences • Examples of how race/ethnicity is not relevant • Mention of assimilation • Mention of identification with American (or White American culture) • Positive affect about minimizing differences • Statements that race does not matter	discuss with partner or address with others) • Limited or no mention of race (implicitly/indirectly stating that race, differences, and/or interraciality is minor or unimportant) --- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Denial or minimization of differences across multiple responses • Multiple examples of how race/ethnicity is not relevant • Stating that they do not view their relationship as "interracial" • Mention of assimilation • Mention of strong identification with American (or White American) culture

		• Statements that race should not matter in choosing a partner • Statements that they see their partner as a human not by their race	• Statements that race should not matter • Statements that they see their partner as a human not by their race • Use of strong language (e.g., ultimately, in the end, overall) that signals their overarching view of relationship even as other perspectives are highlighted	• Positive affect about minimizing differences • Statements that race does not matter • Statements that race should not matter • Statements that they see their partner as a human not by their race • Use of strong language (e.g., never, always, overall, ultimately, in the end) - dismissing other perspectives
Multiculturalism	Ethnic/cultural differences are not salient in the relationship.	Ethnic/cultural differences have **weak or minimal salience** in the relationship, as evidenced by **one or more** of the following: • Directly stating that ethnic/cultural differences are a **relatively unimportant or minor** aspect of the relationship • **Limited mention of ethnic/cultural differences** (e.g., few examples, vague responses, responses not developed)	Ethnic/cultural differences have **moderate salience** in the relationship, as evidenced by **one or more** the following: • Directly stating that ethnic/cultural differences **have some relevance** to the relationship or is important/relevant in **some** contexts, but is **not one of the most defining features** of the relationship • Mentioning this process **across multiple responses or**	Ethnic/cultural differences are **very salient** in the relationship, as evidenced by **one or more** of the following: • Directly stating that ethnic/cultural differences are an **important, integral part** of the relationship • Mentioning this process across multiple responses or examples, or **well-developed response** if only 1-2 examples are mentioned

		• **Limited mention of how ethnic/cultural differences impact the relationship** • **Differences discussed are trivial/superficial (e.g., using the dishwasher)** --- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Instances of ethnic/cultural differences **occur on a rare or infrequent basis** • Instances of ethnic/cultural differences are **viewed as minor** ("Our differences are small," "Differences do not come up often, but one way differences come up is _____")	**examples, or fairly developed response** if only 1-2 examples are mentioned • Response explains how ethnic/cultural differences **impact** the relationship • Ethnicity/culture may **only be salient in certain situations** --- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Opportunities for learning from differences or cultural sharing within the relationship **occur on an infrequent basis** • Instances of learning, growth, and/or bonding are **viewed as minor** ("Our differences are small," "Differences do not come up often, but	• Response explains how ethnic/cultural differences **impact** the relationship **in a significant way** • Ethnic/cultural differences seen as an **ongoing (e.g., day-to-day)** aspect of the relationship --- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Learning from differences **occurs on a frequent basis** in the relationship • Framing the process of learning from differences as positive • Framing differences as opportunities to learn from each other • Use of positive affect to discuss learning from

		• **Vague statement** that frames learning from differences as positive • **Vague statement that** IRR is an opportunity to learn from or teach each other • Use of positive affect to discuss learning from differences (e.g., express appreciation), but **stated in a vague manner or no/few specific examples** • Reference internal reflection on the role of ethnic/cultural differences but views ethnic/cultural differences as unimportant • Reference discussions with partner about ethnic/cultural differences, but views ethnicity/culture as unimportant • Reference discussions with other social support about ethnic/cultural aspects of interracial	one way differences come up is _____") • Framing the process of learning from differences as positive • Framing differences as opportunities to learn from each other • Use of positive affect to discuss learning from differences (e.g., express appreciation) • Reference internal reflection on the role of ethnicity/culture • Reference discussions with partner about ethnic/cultural differences • Reference discussions with other social support about ethnic/cultural aspects of interracial relationship • Highlighting specific traits as important to navigating differences (e.g., open-mindedness, curiosity, empathy, understanding)	differences (e.g., express appreciation) • Highlighting specific traits as important to navigating differences (e.g., open-mindedness, curiosity, empathy, understanding) • Specific example of learning about culture • Families learning about cultures alongside participants/partners • Discussion of misunderstandings or challenges that occur • Partner is not open to learning about culture (e.g., unwillingness to try food) • Language barriers • Navigating parental expectations of same race/ethnicity partner • Concerns about being able to maintain cultural heritage • Family differences around dating norms • **Recognize that their relationship is different from a same-**

		relationship, but views ethnicity/culture as unimportant • Does not think it is important to discuss ethnicity/culture with partner • Highlighting specific traits as important to navigating differences (e.g., open-mindedness, curiosity, empathy, understanding) • Families learning about cultures alongside participants/partners • Discussion of misunderstandings or challenges that occur • Partner is not open to learning about culture (e.g., unwillingness to try food) • Language barriers • Navigating parental expectations of same race/ethnicity partner • Concerns about being able to maintain cultural heritage • Family differences around dating norms	• Specific example of learning about culture • Families learning about cultures alongside participants/partners • Discussion of misunderstandings or challenges that occur • Partner is not open to learning about culture (e.g., unwillingness to try food) • Language barriers • Navigating parental expectations of same race/ethnicity partner • Concerns about being able to maintain cultural heritage • Family differences around dating norms • **Recognize that their relationship is different from a same-race relationship due to ethnic/cultural differences** • **Recognize that their relationship has unique aspects/challenges than same-race**	**race relationship due to ethnic/cultural differences** • **Recognize that their relationship has unique aspects/challenges than same-race relationships, specifically due to the impact of ethnic/cultural differences**

			relationships, specifically due to the impact of ethnic/cultural differences	
Racial awareness	The recognition of race as relating to systems of power and oppression is not salient in the relationship. ---------- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code: • Views race as phenotypic differences (hair, skin color) • Mentions of race (or racial differences) actually	The recognition of race as relating to systems of power and oppression has **weak or minimal** salience in the relationship, as evidenced by **one or more** of the following: • **Limited mention of race** (e.g., few examples, vague responses, responses not developed) • **Race may only be salient during infrequent situations** • If race is acknowledged, the **impact of race on the relationship is unclear or limited** (e.g., no discussion of race/interraciality with partner or others) ----------	The recognition of race as relating to systems of power and oppression has **moderate** salience in the relationship, as evidenced by **one or more** of the following: • Mentioning race/interraciality **across multiple responses and/or examples or fairly developed response** if only 1-2 examples are mentioned • Explanation of how race impacts the relationship • Race may **only be salient in certain situations** • Though race is acknowledged as important in **some** contexts, it is **not seen as central, important, or defining aspect** of	The recognition of race as relating to systems of power and oppression has **strong** salience in the relationship, as evidenced by **one or more** of the following: • Mentioning race/interraciality across multiple responses and/or examples or **well-developed response** if only 1-2 examples are mentioned • Explanation of how race impacts the relationship • Race is a **central, important, or defining aspect** of the relationship • Racial differences are an **ongoing issue/concern** in the relationship

	refer to ethnicity or culture	Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Reference internal reflection on the role of race, but views race as unimportant • Reference discussions with partner about race (e.g., privilege, challenging partner's views), but views race as unimportant • Reference discussions with other social support about interracial relationship (or racial isues within the relationship), but views race as unimportant • Does not think it is important to discuss race with partner • Acknowledging being the "only person in the room" but does not	how the participant views the relationship --- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Reference internal reflection on the role of race • Reference discussions with partner about race (e.g., privilege, challenging partner's views) • Reference discussions with other social support about interracial relationship (or racial isues within the relationship) • Reflection on implications of Asian/White stereotypes for their relationship or how others view their relationship	--- Responses in this category may have these attributes, but these attributes alone are not automatic grounds for applying this code, nor is the presence of these attributes necessary to apply this code: • Reference internal reflection on the role of race • Reference discussions with partner about race (e.g., privilege, challenging partner's views) • Reference discussions with other social support about interracial relationship (or racial isues within the relationship) • Reflection on implications of Asian/White stereotypes for their relationship or how others view their relationship • Recognize that their relationship is different

		discuss the importance of it • Reflection on implications of Asian/White stereotypes for their relationship or how others view their relationship	• Recognize that their relationship is different from a same-race relationship • Recognize that their relationship has unique aspects/challenges than same-race relationships, specifically due to impact of systemic racial oppression	from a same-race relationship • Recognize that their relationship has unique aspects/challenges than same-race relationships, specifically due to impact of systemic racial oppression • Believe that critical racial consciousness is an important trait for their partner to have